THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING PALLOTTINES

by

Rev. JOHN S. GAYNOR, Ph.D. D.D.
Priest of the Society of the Catholic Apostolate

ROME 1962

Liber, cui titulus: « The English-Speaking Pallottines » a R.D. Ioanne S. Gaynor, societatis nostrae sacerdote conscriptus, imprimi potest.

GULIELMUS MOEHLER SAC, *Rector Generalis*.

Romae, die secunda iunii 1962

GREGORIAN UNIVERSITY PRESS — ROMA

FOREWORD

The purpose of this work is to set down such information as I have been able to collect about the early history of our Society amongst people using the English language. The vicissitudes and indeed the hardships of those early days, the disappointments and the successes of our pioneer priests, appear, either factually or by implication, in the story which is one of slow and steady progress in spite of all the setbacks.

The death of our Founder, which occurred when the Society was at a critical moment of its formative period, was a crushing blow to his companions, from which, however, they recovered — mindful of his dying words that the Society would live and would be blessed by God. They were very few — they had a great deal of work in hand — and a mysterious Providence did not for many years raise up any great leader among them. But they had a stubborn confidence, which the event verified, that the great and apparently insurmountable obstacles which kept cropping up would somehow be overcome.

They were devoted to the memory of a great man — for who can live on familiar terms with a saint and be as though he knew him not? They had too a consciousness of mission — for Pallotti gave his life and created his Society for a high and difficult ideal which descended after his death, a sacred trust, to his few effective followers. Our story tells what they did with that trust.

It is sometimes said by those who do not know the facts that after Pallottti's death his immediate followers surrendered the vision and made few if any efforts to realise his great apostolic plan. But before going into this matter it is necessary to enquire which was the "image" of the Society and its purposes which those early Pallottines had in their minds when they set about realising, to the best of their abilities, the Pallottian ideal in the world. And this is definitely not an

easy task. One way of going about it is to take and evaluate the several descriptions which our Founder himself has bequeathed to his followers. For instance, an "image" emerges from this passage of a draft Statute of the Catholic Apostolate, drawn up in 1838, which describes the work of the priests associated whith the work as follows:

> "The works proper to the Pious Society are: the exercise of the apostolic ministry, such as preaching the Word, instructing the ignorant, administering the sacraments and encouraging people to receive them frequently, combating error and evildoing, promoting the spirit of religion and piety; the composition and propagation of books and tracts directed to explaining, defending and sustaining religion; the encouragement and propagation of all exercises of piety and devotion which tend to revive faith, increase piety and correct evildoing; to take part in the ministry, not only in the church of the Society itself but in all other churches and institutions of all kinds where the services of the associates may be required."

Another "image" emerges from the famous twelve-fold division of the apostolate which Pallotti describes in his book of 1839 on the Pious Society of the Catholic Apostolate. Vincent apportions the apostolate in a twelve-fold field — the twelve Procures, as he called them — each dedicated to one of the Apostles. These are the objects of this apostolate in the order in which he laid them down: the advancement of the spiritual, ministerial and scientific culture of the clergy; missions and retreats; the foreign missions; the promotion and re-activation of confraternities and sodalities; the education of youth; the cultivation of the religious states of life; the promotion of the rural worker; the spiritual care of prisoners; the apostolate of the sick; the spiritual care of soldiers; the promotion of devotions approved by the Church; the relief of the poor by means of Catholic associations.

In the rule which Palloti wrote for the priests and brothers of the Congregation of the Catholic Apostolate in the year 1846, we find this "image":

> "Our... Congregation has for its special task the duty of taking part, together with the secular and regular clergy, in a spirit of emulating charity and zeal, in all evangelical undertakings for the greater glory of God and the greater santification of souls; inviting all Catholics of both sexes and of all walks in life to a greater love of God and the neighbour by multiplying spiritual and temporal means for the revival of faith and the rekindling of charity..."

We are not here concerned with discussing whether these "images" are coincident or diverse, nor how far they are expressions of the same fundamental ideal. We cannot however forbear to point out that any evaluation of them ought not to be dissociated, in our view, from the very concrete picture which Raphael Melia, Pallotti's oldest and most articulate disciple, painted of the Society, its nature and its works.

> "The first body, or class, of the Society is composed of *labourers,* and consists of priests assisted by such laics as are able to join them in the works of the sacred ministry or literary productions; the second is called spiritual coadjutors and is composed of every class of persons, and of both sexes, who devote themselves to prayer... the third is likewise composed of every class and of both sexes, termed co-operators, who contribute temporal means...."

Melia then deals with the change of title of the Society which took place in 1854, in the following terms:

> "Hence the Society of Vincent is to be acknowledged now under the title of Pious Society of Missions, foreign and national, and the three classes of the same are to be called with the common name of Pious Society of Missions, with, however, this difference — that the priests and the brothers coadjutors living in community in the retreats, or colleges, of the Pious Society form the interior, central, moving directing body of the Pious Society, while the other sections of the Society constitute only the external and directed body of the same..."

The historical setting in which the apostolates of our early priests were carried out must be judiciously taken into account in any evaluation of their work.

In the following pages the reader will find our priests employed in the usual work of all priests — preaching, hearing confessions, and so on — the ordinary care of souls. He will also find them engaged in pioneering parish and school work and (with notable success) in making converts to the Faith, and in the preaching of Missions; he will read of them working for prisoners, both in gaol and after their release; he will read how they collected vestments and other material for the Foreign Missions: he will read about their efforts to create Catholic organisations which would bring the clergy and the laity closer together; he will find them spreading out over the world endeavouring to save the faith of the emigrant Catholic; he will find

them too going into the mission fields in order to convert the pagan peoples. The work which was done till the death of Dr. Faa di Bruno, was done under the direction of our Founder's own companions. The work done under Fathers Bannin and Whitmee was done in accordance with the directives which both of them laid down when they were elected to their respective offices; in which directives there is an explicit appeal to the mind and the intentions of our Founder. They were trying to implement the Procures marked ont in Pallotti's great vision.

In the compilation of this work I have been helped by several kind friends — one of whom I must mention by name for his promptitude and patience in dealing with many troublesome queries — Fr. Thomas Hulhoven S.C.A. To all of them my grateful thanks.

J. S. G.

CHAPTER I

The Irish Province of our Society, erected by the General Chapter of 1909, possesses historical antecedents which reach back to the days of our Blessed Founder himself. The city of Rome, where Vincent Pallotti spent all his life, is one of the chief meeting-places of history, whither for centuries the great and the little people of the world, the antiquarian and the tourist, the devout and the merely curious have been travelling on all the roads which, as the proverb has it, lead to Rome. It is the city too where the great theological schools of the Catholic Church have had their doors always open to the young clerics and the religious of the whole Catholic world, whose superiors have been desirous of training their men, *in spem ecclesiae,* under the shadow of St. Peter's Chair. This city, centre of the Church's administration and site of its highest courts, has always been the resort as well of the prelates and priests who by reason of their offices from time to time are compelled to visit the *limina Apostolorum.* No inhabitant of Rome lives indifferent to these perpetual comings and goings; all the more if he be a Roman, as our Founder was, with an intense interest in the welfare of these moving multitudes. And still more, if he sees in them as Pallotti did, a potential for the propagation of faith and charity throughout the whole earth.

Tourists and pilgrims, however, are a very mobile population, people on the wing. For centuries Rome has also housed fairly stable groups of foreign residents within her walls: the staffs and inmates of the English-language ecclesiastical establishments — the English, Irish and Scots Colleges, the Irish Dominican, Franciscan and Augustinian monasteries, the English-speaking students of the Propaganda, scattered English, Irish, American students in other establishments, and other English-speaking clergy who for various reasons spent more or less long stretches of time in the Eternal City. During Vincent's boyhood nearly all these establishments were either

closed or were greatly reduced, for it was the period of the French domination in Rome. After the fall of Napoleon they were gradually reopened and coincident with our Founder's advance towards maturity, a constant ever-increasing stream of clerics and aspirants from the English-speaking lands flowed to Rome.

Vincent Pallotti was not alone a fervent believer in the necessity of enlisting the laity in the Catholic Apostolate. He was also a mirror of the perfection of the priestly state, a model of how a priest must be and must act in the modern world. He was in fact keenly interested in clerical students and priests and a great portion of his life was given over to assisting in the task of training them — in particular their spiritual training. In the Roman Seminary, the Propaganda College, the Irish and other Colleges, he exercised this apostolate for many years; his own residence was open at all times to such clerics as cared to share in his activities and his devotions. The doors of his rooms in the church of the Holy Spirit, *dei Napoletani,* where the first community organized by the Society of the Catholic Apostolate assembled in 1837, were open to all comers.

We will now set down, briefly, the relationships which grew up, in virtue of these contacts, between Pallotti and the English-speaking clerical residents of Rome in his lifetime. The first name which must be mentioned is that of Nicholas Cardinal Wiseman, a member of the first group of English clerical students to inhabit the Venerable English College on its reopening after the French Revolution. Wiseman in time became the Rector of the College till, in 1840, he was appointed assistant Vicar-Apostolic of the Midland District in England. The English College is situated in that quarter of Rome where Pallotti spent all his life; he was therefore well known to several generations of students and superiors in the College and frequently rendered them spiritual and other assistance. Nicholas Wiseman was one of the hundred and eight important personages whom Pallotti consulted during the years 1836 and 1837 concerning the nature and the purposes of the Catholic Apostolate which he had founded the year before. Wiseman's reply is extant:

> "I, the undersigned, Rector of the Venerable College and Mission of St. Thomas of the English, declare that I have read with attention the plan and the rules of the 'Roman Catholic Aposto-

late' and I approve of it in full, and desire its extension and perfect success, for the glory of God and the salvation of souls. Rome, January 17th, 1837."[1]

Two years later, when Wiseman is preparing to go to England in order to take up his post as Vicar-Apostolic, he writes as follows to Fr. Spencer, the Passionist, dealing with the possibilities of spreading the famous Roman devotion of the Forty Hours throughout Great Britain:

"In a day or two (he writes) I am going to concert with Pallotti the best means of propagating this devotion both in communities and among the people."[2]

The manner in which Blessed Vincent Pallotti sowed in the mind of Wiseman the ideal of a missionary college in England (which was later to be realised by Cardinal Vaughan with the famous Mill Hill Missionary Society) is related by Vaughan in the following terms:

"In 1860 I was with Cardinal Wiseman in the Isle of Wight. We were driving out... The idea was working within me and at last I asked him whether he had any interest in foreign missions. 'Yes, why do you ask?' he said. 'Because I have something on my mind and I fear to tell you. You will snub me. I believe England should do something for the foreign missions.' said I. 'Then I will tell you' he replied, 'why you need not think I will snub you. I have never yet told this to anyone, but the time, I believe, has come. When I was in Rome before my consecration I had great mental troubles, and I went to a holy man, since dead and declared Venerable (Pallotti). He made me sit on one side of a little table — he sat on the other. A crucifix was on the table between us. After I had opened my mind and laid bare all its troubles to him, he slipped down from his chair to his knees and after a moment's prayer, said, 'Monsignor, you will never know the perfect rest you seek until you establish in England a College for the foreign mission.' These words fell on me like a thunderbolt; I was in no way prepared for them. I had no interest at the time in foreign missions, nor had the Abbate Pallotti. He gave no other answer to my difficulties. I went home and into retreat preparatory for my consecration. I then made a resolution to try to form a Society of priests who should establish a college for foreign missions. On reaching England I at once explained my plans to Dr. Walsh (then Bishop of the London District). He opposed them definitively and said that Oscott was to be my foreign missionary college. Being only

---

[1] Archivium Gen Vota.
[2] Life of Cardinal Wiseman, by Wilfred Ward.

a coadjutor I felt that I had no choice but to obey and that God's time had not yet come.' I determined to wait till the person who should undertake it should be presented to me, and never to pass a day without praying to know God's Will and His time for its execution. You are the first person who has offered himself for the purpose. I am now old and cannot do much myself, but I see that God has heard my prayer and that the work is from Him.' ..."[3]

The old Cardinal's memory was at fault in some particulars in this narrative. In the first place, Pallotti had been interested in foreign missions for many years before the date of the interview Wiseman had with him; he had, in fact, endeavoured to set up a missionary college already and he had gathered a nucleus of missionaries around him. In the second place, Wiseman forgot that in 1849 he himself had invited Pallotti to come to England in order to assist him with the missionary college which he (Wiseman) was proposing to found at that time.

Wiseman's successor in the See of Westminster, Cardinal Manning, though probably not personally acquainted with our Blessed Founder, learned much about Pallotti during a visit paid to Rome in 1847-48. He was still an Anglican Archdeacon. Manning kept a Diary of the *notabilia* of his sojourn in Rome, many of whose monuments he visited in the company of a guide, who was, apparently, a certain Professor Broechi, an Italian language-teacher and part proprietor of the English newspaper in Rome " The Roman Advertiser ". Here is an entry relating to the 12th December of 1847:

> "S. Broechi told me yesterday... Abbate Pallotti is a saint; a founder of regular clerks; that he spends his life serving the sick and in hearing confessions. Is the Pope's confessor..."[4]

The Archdeacon followed up this information by paying a visit to Pallotti's headquarters at San Salvatore in Onda.

> "Coming home I stopped at the church of Abbate Pallotti. His congregation is called Apostolatus Catholicus sub protectione Sanctae Mariae Reginae Apostolorum. There are 17 or 18 members. A branch in London."[5]

---

[3] Life of Cardinal Vaughan, by Snead-Cox.
[4] Life of Cardinal Manning, by Purcell, Vol. 1, p. 365.
[5] Ib., p. 366.

There is yet another reference to our Founder in the Diary. Manning came into touch during his Roman visit with several ingenuous Liberals who were urging reforms on the Pope and were thus unthinkingly preparing the way for the real revolutionaries who were even then making their plans for the violent seizure of power. Prominent amongst these Liberals was the famous Padre Ventura, a former General of the Theatines and a well-known preacher. Ventura's remarks, as recorded in the Manning Diary, are somewhat surprising, in view of the fact that Pallotti was always his true friend. On January 11th, 1848, Ventura and Manning had a conversation:

> "Padre Ventura said that Abbate Pallotti was an *oscurantista funesto* and that he did the Pope great harm; that one day the Pope had told Ventura that Pallotti had been telling him of the diminution of religion and of confessions, and alarmed him. Ventura said he would be alarmed if he did not know it was not true; that now hypocrites declared themselves, and Ventura added with great energy: 'This is the only safe state.' A Monsignore present said of Pallotti: *Santifica l'oscurantismo.*" [6]

Whilst the Anglican Archdeacon was seeing the sights, another famous Englishman, the great Newman, was staying in Rome for a very different purpose, viz. preparing for the priesthood. Newman tells us in his Diary that he visited our Blessed Founder at San Salvatore and the memory of the visit was recalled many years later when, as Cardinal Newman, he petitioned the Holy See for the introduction of Pallotti's Cause of Beatification.

> "Though I personally knew him only lightly (he writes) nevertheless from a visit which I paid him in Rome, and from his venerable aspect and his words, I conceived a great esteem for his sanctity ..." [7]

Vincent Pallotti's closest friend amongst the English-speaking clergy of Rome was Father Tobias Kirby, an alumnus of the Roman Seminary who became successively Vice-rector and Rector of the Irish College in Rome. He held the latter position for forty years and was appointed Titular Archbishop of Ephesus by Leo XIII, who had been his school-fellow. Archbishop Kirby lived to bear testimony to Pallotti's holiness

---

[6] Ib. p. 368.
[7] Process. Beat. Postulationes.

during the Apostolic Process for his Beatification. Kirby was a native of Tallow, Co. Waterford, where he was born in 1804.

"After I came to Rome in 1829 (he states in his evidence) I heard about Vincent Pallotti from the Scripture professor, Allemand. In the autumn of that year I went to stay at Subiaco, at the house of the Vincentian Fathers there; Allemand was there at the same time. I had not yet determined where to settle in Rome and Allemand spoke to me about the Roman Seminary, where Pallotti was the confessor... As I did not succeed in securing a place with the Vincentians I entered the Roman College that same year after the holidays. Pallotti was my spiritual Director till 1835, that is, all the time I was in the Seminary. Later I often went to confession to him and I continued to frequent his company, either by taking part in the conferences for ecclesiastics at San Salvatore in Onda or by sharing in his pious undertakings as an external cooperator. I attained a great familiarity with him. On one occasion, lacking a preacher for the spiritual exercises at the Irish College, I went to visit him at the convent *delle Vergini* where he was accustomed to hear confessions, and acting as though I merely wished to take him for a drive, I carried him in a coach to the Irish College, where he stayed all through the exercises. He lived with me during the months of the Roman Revolution in 1849, until the French entered Rome. Towards the end of that time, an English Catholic gentleman, a Mr. Tempest, moved by his love and veneration for Pallotti, asked permission to come and live at the college, where he stayed for some time... In the Roman Seminary we all thought he was a saint..."[8]

It was on the same occasion that Archbishop Kirby recalled how he was present at St. Agatha's, the church of the Irish College, when Pallotti performed the ceremony of Exorcism over a possessed woman. He also bore witness to the conviction which existed amongst the students of the Roman College that our Founder was known, on at least one occasion, to be present in two places simultaneously, a prodigy performed in the interests of a dying person.

Our Society owes a debt of gratitude to Archbishop Kirby for yet another service. There was a famous occasion when Pius IX honoured our community by coming unannounced to the Epiphany celebrations in the church of Sant'Andrea della Valle and ascending himself into the pulpit in order to address the congregation. This was in 1847. Tobias Kirby was present and some days later the English newspaper of Rome "The Roman Advertiser" published under his name a full report of

[8] Process. Apostol.

the matter of the sermon delivered by His Holiness. Kirby's text is in fact the best version of what the Pope said on this occasion.

Archbishop Kirby died full of years and honour in 1895. Five years after his demise a commemorative hall and monument were erected in the Irish College, Rome, and the dedication ceremony was performed by a Mgr. Bartolini, President of the famous Society of the *Arcadi*. The address delivered by this prelate, who knew Kirby very well, was printed, in Italian and English. It contains the following passages dealing with the relationship between Pallotti and Kirby:

> "A stooped and inspired priest was often in his (Kirby's) room. The two friends spoke at length with simple affability. They understood each other's glances, they comprehended each other... A profane ear would not have understood that spiritual and sublime colloquy. They were contemplating the nearing of the storm, the darkening of the times. Detached, however, from the things of this world, they were were not fearsome of the danger. But the danger came, the days of the persecution of the churchmen, the hatred of all that was not diabolical and these two priests met in the Irish College and there they were when the populace invaded that pious place. They were not troubled nor afraid, they prayed together and trusted together in God — Tobias Kirby and Vincent Pallotti. The latter went to heaven many years before the former, who lived to bear witness to the sanctity of his companion, in the Apostolic Process. No one better than Kirby to testify to the rare virtues of our dear Roman priest whose spirit was penetrated by the grace of an enamoured intellect.
>
> "Tobias Kirby remained on earth with the vivid impression of Pallotti's heroism and he gave himself with extraordinary energy to the apostolate. He had a predilection for the assistance of the dying. He contracted the plague and almost lost his life, and having recovered, returned to the slums where he had fallen ill. It was his favourite apostolate." [9]

The florid Italian style, which is carried over into the English translation, certainly illustrates the deep and warm affection between the two men. That friendship did not prevent a pleasant touch of Celtic wit appearing in Kirby's recollection of those dark days during the 1849 Revolution spent in the Irish College.

> "While he was staying at the College (Kirby states) he used to invite others into his room to pray with him. I remember

---

[9] In Memory of Archbishop Kirby. Rome, 1900.

that on one occasion, just after breakfast, the Abbate Sciamplicotti was thus invited and they prayed together till dinner-time. During the recreation after this meal, the Abbate Sciamplicotti addressed Pallotti: 'Listen, don't invite me to pray with you again, because I won't come!" [10]

It further appears from Kirby's testimony that a very frequent expression on Pallotti's lips, whenever he sought to prevent excessively harsh judgements being passed on the defects of conduct of others, was: 'Poverelli, bisogna compatirli.' (Poor things, they are to be pitied). While he was staying at the Irish College, some particularly atrocious crime was committed in the city during the excesses of the Revolution:

"On hearing the news (says Kirby) Pallotti inquired who were the authors of this outrage, and promptly received this reply from the Rector of the College, Mgr. Cullen: 'I nostri poverelli'" [11]

Shortly before his death Archbishop Kirby published a book of meditations for the use of students preparing for the priesthood. It is the opinion of Fr. Ansgar Faller S.C.A., a great expert on the spiritual thought of Pallotti, that the form and content of these meditations bear very distinct traces of the Pallottian conception of priestly sanctity.

Another well-known Irish prelate who remembered with deep gratitude the influence which Pallotti had upon him was Dr .Bartholomew Woodlock, who after his return to Ireland from Rome became successively Professor at All Hallows College ,Rector of the Catholic University of Ireland and finally Bishop of Ardagh and Clonmacnoise. Bishop Woodlock was one of the witnesses for the Apostolic Process and his testimony, of which we give some extracts, is particularly interesting.

"In November or December of the year 1836 I came to Rome and entered the Roman Seminary on the 7th December of that year. I stayed till the 25th April, 1842, and took the degrees of doctor of philosophy and theology... I knew Vincent Pallotti personaliy, while he was one of the confessors of the College and he was my confessor as long as he came to the College, except during the period of the cholera, when the students were at Pariola and no one was allowed access to the place... I had a very high opinion of him and his reputation amongst the students was that of a saint... There was talk of bilocation and that he slept only two hours each night... Often he would hear my confession while standing or kneeling, which he did, in my opinion, because he

---

[10] Process. Apost.

was combating sleep... I think that my companions used to feel that his habit of kneeling down between confessions was due to the same cause. He was also my adviser... I had two or three severe illnesses; the first time I did not know how serious the matter was, but the second time I asked Pallotti, when he came to hear my confession, to tell me if I was in danger. This was about 1839. I was advised by some friends to interrupt my studies and go home. I wrote to Pallotti asking his advice and he replied in a note written on the letter itself, advising me to stay in Rome... I have a devotion to Vincent Pallotti because he introduced me to the ecclesiastical life and gave me much good spiritual advice." [12]

Bishop Woodlock stated further that he still possessed this letter and that on return to Ireland he would make it available to the Tribunal in charge of the Process. For some reason, however, this was not done and perhaps it is still in existence, in some collection of Woodlock Papers where, one day, a collector of *Pallottiana* may find it... That Woodlock's recollections were not at fault in this respect is borne out by our Blessed Founder himself, who in the letter marked 614 wrote thus:

> "I have answered Woodlock, who has written to me quoting his mother's words, and as I have dealt directly with them, I believe he will be convinced and hence will not leave." [13]

Dr. Woodlock declared that he resided in Rome till April 25th, 1842. In the preceding months of that same year, Father John Hand, the famous Irish priest who founded the great Irish missionary college of All Hallows, paid his visit to the Eternal City in order to obtain the sanction of Propaganda for his College. Fr. Hand was a native of Meath who after a course in theology at Maynooth was ordained in Dublin at the end of 1835 and spent his first years of priesthood assisting the Vincentian Fathers in their various apostolates. His interest in the Society for the Propagation of the Faith led him to undertake the task of supplying priests for the foreign missions, particularly in the English-speaking lands. Having secured the approval of the Irish bishops for his venture, he went to France and finally to Rome. It is certain that during his stay in the Eternal City he came into contact with Pallotti.

---

[11] Ib.
[12] Ib.
[13] Lettere Pallotti.

Fr. Hand presented, on February 3rd, 1842, a petition to Propaganda for the approval of his missionary College; this was granted, on February 28th of the same year, by Cardinal Franzoni, Prefect of the Congregation. In order to secure this prompt and favourable reply 'he called upon everyone' says his biographer 'he knew or heard of as having influence.' A short time after the approval was obtained, an Appeal, in the French language, for donations to the College was published in Rome by the Propaganda Press and a list of ecclesiastics who were appointed to receive subscriptions was appended. Their names were the following: Cardinal Acton, Monsignors Cullen (Irish College) and Baggs (English College)(Revv. D.P. McPherson (Scots College), Dowling, O.S.A., Reynolds, O.F.M., the Abbe Pallotti (Church of the Holy Spirit) and Abbe Rebours, Sta Maria del Pascolo. Fr. Hand was lodging, his biographer states, in a small room near the church last mentioned.

The First Vatican Council (1869-70) brought to Rome large numbers of English-speaking prelates, some of whom in their youth had been students in the Roman Colleges. They recollected the saintly Roman priest who had influenced their lives in the days of their youth, and, on learning that the Cause of his Beatification was under way addressed Postulatory letters to the Holy See. These letters were identical in form — with one exception, that of Archbishop John Spalding of Baltimore, U.S.A. The Spalding document is evidently the outcome of deep and well-remembered experiences. It is dated March 19th, 1870 ,and, amongst other things, he states this:

> « While I was a student of Propaganda in Rome from 1830 to 1834, I had occasion to know the eminent virtues of the Servant of God, Vincent Pallotti, who exercised at that time the function of Extra-ordinary Confessor and Spiritual Director of the College ».

He then goes on to state that he is moved to present this petition, " out of gratitude towards this Servant of God, my spiritual Father. "[14]

Some months later, on January 28th, 1871, Archbishop Spalding made another statement which is one of the most beautiful tributes paid to Pallotti by his contemporaries.

> " Vincent Pallotti (he wrote) was well known to all Rome for his eminent sanctity. We well remember him as we knew him neary forty years ago, when we gloried in the honour of his

[14] Process. Beat. Postulationes.

spiritual direction. The good odour of his virtues still sweetens our membry and like a halo clusters round our heart.

"What impressed us as the most strking traits in Vincent's character were his mortification, including the entire forgetfulness of self, his unflagging charity to all, especially towards his penitents; his patience which no disappointment or cross could ruffle; his deep humility, which made him consider himself the last of men; his relentless zeal, which continually burned in his heart with a subdued and steady flame; and finally and above all his ardent love of God and of Jesus Christ in his sacred humanity as well as in his divinity. This love which prompted and was the life and soul of all his actions was at the same time the key to his wonderful equanimity and the source of all his fortitude. In addition, it provided the well-spring of an internal peace which beamed outwardly, heaven-like in his countenance. For almost forty years of missionary life Vincent's pale, benign and saintly face has continued to beam upon us, directing, guiding, teaching us with a divine sternness and compassion. Thus, we cannot find it in our hearts to stray far or long from the straight path which he carved out so impressively by his instructions, and more eloquently by his example. To follow both more faithfully would further advance us on the way of perfection." [15]

The other Bishops who signed the Postulatory Letters were: Bishop James Quinn, of Brisbane; Timothy O'Mahony, Bishop of Armidale, Australia, from 1869 to 1878, and later, till his death in 1892, Auxiliary Bishop of Toronto, Canada; Archbishop Daniel Murphy who commenced his priestly career as a missionary in Madras and later went to Nagpur, consecrated Vicar-apostolic of Hyderabad in 1846, he was appointed Archbishop of Hobart, Australia in 1866; Thomas Power of St. John's, Newfoundland, who went to that See from the presidency of Clonliffe College, Dublin; Archbishop Thomas Croke, who made his studies in Rome in the forties, at the Irish College and after some years as professor in Carlow, became parish priest of Charleville, then President of St. Colman's College, Fermoy, again parish priest, this time of Doneraile, then Vicar Apostolic of Auckland, receiving his consecration in Rome towards the end of the Vatican Council, and finally Archbishop of Cashel, he died at Thurles in 1902; Bishop Henry Elder, who was a student in Propaganda between 1842 and 1846, became Bishop of Natchez in 1857 and Archbishop of Cincinnati in 1883; Cardinal Patrick Moran, who studied at the Irish College, Rome, from 1842 till 1856, was appointed

---

[15] Life of Fr. Vincent Pallotti, by Melia. 1871.

Coadjutor-Bishop of Ossory in 1884 and later Cardinal Archbishop of Sydeny in Australia. Cardinal Moran was resident in the Irish College during the weeks that Pallotti spent there during the Roman Revolution, came to know him intimately and retained throughout his life a vivid recollection of Pallotti's virtues, as the Cardinal later told Fr. Whitmee.

The early records of the Society supply us with the names of two Irish priests who were associated with our Blessed Founder in the original community at the clergy house of the church of the Holy Ghost in the Via Giulia. One of them was a Fr. Patrick O'Sullivan, or Sullivan, of the diocese of Ardagh, who spent some time with the community, leaving it, presumably for his native land, in November 1840. The other was a Fr. Henry O'Farrell, a native of the diocese of Limerick, who was a student of the Irish College, Rome, withdrew from this institution and sought the protection of Pallotti's community and spent over a year there, till his departure from Rome on May 7th, 1842. Fr. O'Farrell died as parish priest of Cratloe, in the diocese of Limerick, and it is related of him that on the annual recurrence of that Sunday Gospel in which Our Lord speaks of his disciples as possessing the power to cast out devils, Fr. O'Farrell was wont to relate to his parishoners the scene which took place at the exorcism performed by Vincent in the College Chapel of Saint'Agatha dei Goti, exhibiting to them a nail which the possessed person regurgitated on that occasion. He died in Cratloe on the 24th of January, 1887.

The Rev. Florence Hardinge Ivers was an English priest who made his studies in Rome. During his stay in this city he assisted our Founder at the great Epiphany celebrations which the Society of the Catholic Apostolate organized from 1836 onwards.

In the series of Latin letters which Blessed Vincent Pallotti wrote during his reclusion in the Irish College during the excesses of the Roman Revolution of 1849, there is one addressed to a Fr. Hodgson, a London priest who had manifested to Frs. Melia and Faa di Bruno a desire to join the Society. He was, we understand, a preacher of popular missions and Faa di Bruno writes of him as the founder of a Mission in London. He does not appear to have been personally acquainted with our Founder.

The records show that three English laymen had dealings with Vincent. One of these was Lord Clifford, an English

nobleman who spent many years in Rome and was one of the earliest benefactors of the Pia Casa della Carità, founded by Pallotti. The second was the Earl of Shrewsbury and the third was M. Walter Tempest, whose affection for our Founder, prompted him to seek admission to the Irish College while Pallotti was lodged there in 1849. Three letters addressed to Tempest by Pallotti have survived (Lettere 1559, 1567, 1584), and in the Pallotti-Melia correspondence, there is a reference to this gentleman, which involves a very rare literary artifice in Pallotti — a pun! Mr. Tempest, it appears, wanted to take Pallotti to Great Britain. 'The Signore Tempest' — he writes to Melia — 'is storming me to go to London with him, at his cratitable expense ... The charitable tempest has grown to considerable proportions ...'

Walter Tempest was a younger son of an ancient English family which had remained faithful to the Church all through the Reformation period. He was born at the family seat in Broughton Hall, in Yorkshire, in 1801, educated at Stonyhurst and entered a shipping company at Leghorn in 1821. Four years later we find him in Florence, where he married a Miss Sargent. In 1842 Tempest was in Rome and became acquainted with Vincent Pallotti and from that time till Vincent's death he was much in his company. Walter Tempest died in Rome in 1868 and was buried in the tomb of the Society, with which he kept up a most cordial relationship.

Our Blessed Founder sought no publicity for himself during his lifetime and in consequence printed contemporary references to him are extremely rare. So far we have found three in the English language. One of them occurs in the famous Guide to Rome,[16] printed in 1843 in that city by an Irish priest, a former Professor of Maynooth College, Dr. Jeremiah Donovan, who thus notices Pallotti's establishment of the Pia Casa della Carita:

> "Conservatory of the Abbate Pallotta (sic). It was instituted, in 1838, by Fr. Vincenzo Pallotta (sic), founder of the Society of the Queen of the Apostles, for the reception of poor females in danger of seduction, of whom it now contains sixty, supported in part by the moderate pension of some, their own industry, which consists principally in weaving, and a small annuity of 120 crowns, contributed by the Commission of subsidies. The community are

---

16 Rome, Ancient and Modern, by Rev. Jeremiah Donovan DD. 4 Vol. Rome 1843.

istructed by females of the Third Order of St. Francis and are under the spiritual direction of the above-mentioned society.".[17]

The other house of refuge founded by Blessed Vincent also finds a mention in Dr. Donovan's work, though its connection with Pallotti is not stated. Here is the reference:

"Conservatory of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. It is situate at St. Onofrio, was instituted by Elizabeth Cozuoli in 1839 and is now supported by Don Carlo Torlonia. It contains thirty-two poor females, who are employed in needlework and other female arts of industry and are governed by a prioress and mistress."[18]

The first English-language newspaper to appear in Rome was, we believe, "The Roman Advertiser," under the editorship of a Mr. C. I. Hermans and owned by Messrs. G. Broechi, A. Morelli and L. Piale, the latter being the proprietor of the famous Rinaldini Bookshop. The first issue of the newspaper is dated October 25th, 1846, and it ran, with seasonal interruptions till April, 1849.[19] It was a weekly publication. "The Roman Advertiser" has a place in Pallottine history. In its issue of January 23rd 1847, there is a lenghty resumé of the famous sermon preached by Pius IX at the Epiphany celebrations that year, when His Holiness ascended the pulpit in place of the regular preacher. This resumé, which bears the title "The Sermon preached by His Holiness" was made by Dr. Tobias Kirby, Vice-rector of the Irish College, whose relationship with Pallotti we have noticed above. Here is the text, which is of interest for our record:

"It was not previously known that the Pope intended to preach, for if it were, where could the church be found capable of containing his auditory? It was expected merely that he would assist at the Te Deum and the concluding benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. But when it was perceived that on entering the church, the Cross which preceded him was moving slowly towards the pulpit, the most intense anxiety pervaded the entire multitude assembled. And when, in a moment after, His Holiness was seen standling in the preacher's place, no language can adequately describe their breathless suspense and attention. Every heart was throbbing, every ear was alert, every eye was fixed on the Pontiff for every word and gesture which should eman-

---

17 Ib. Vol. III, p. 896.
18 Ib. p. 896.
19 Files in the Biblioteca di Storia Moderna e Contemporanea, Rome.

ate from him. The death-like silence which prevailed was at length broken by the sweet and clear voice of the Holy Father, addressing by the endearing appellation of children the vast assemblage present, which comprised persons of almost every clime and every tongue in the universe. 'Miei amatissimi figli' said he, and after alluding to the demonstration of respect paid by the people of Rome to his own person on New Year's day, on the Quirinal, he observed with what delight be heard the assembled thousands respond to the invitation he made to them to bless and honour the sacred and adorable name of God. 'I exclaimed —' said he 'Sit nomen Domini benedictum' and you all answered, as if with one heart and one soul 'Ex hoc nunc et usque in saeculum." This proved how great was the reverence borne by the people of Rome to the sacred name of God. To inculcate on their minds and hearts more and more, how necessary and important it is for Christians to honour this ever blessed and adorable name, was the principal motive which induced him to address his beloved children on that occasion. He desired that Rome, the centre of Catholic unity, should be now, as it always was, conspicuous amongst the other cities of the Christian world in paying the greatest possible reverence to the Holy Name of that great God, who is our Creator, our Supreme Lord and Master. And though there are some so wicked and so debased, as to profane this thrice-holy name, he ardently hoped that no such profanation would ever be heard in the streets of this City. 'And I' continued the Pontiff 'the Vicar of Christ upon earth, though unworthy of so great a dignity, now invest all my hearers with the commission to promote the reverence due to the sacred Name of God, and repress every profanation of it, by every means in their power.'

To this important admonition His Holiness proceeded to add another, viz. that of an exact observance of the holy law of the Church which regards fasting. Amongst the advantages corporal as well as spiritual, resulting from this salutary practice, a most important one, he said, was that it served as a powerful restraint of that vice which he characterized by the name of the Demon of Lust: *Demonio della lussuria.* Against this monster, he continued, which destroys innumerable souls, causes so many premature deaths, scatters such havoc through society in so many places, and brings dishonour, discord and disgrace into the homes of Christian families, our Blessed Redeemer has left us two powerful weapons, those of fasting and of prayer: 'for this kind is not cast out but by fasting and by prayer'. After again and again inculcating, in the most energetic and fervent language, the profoundest reverence for the sacred Name of the Almighty, the necessity of practicing very Christian virtue, those especially of Christian modesty, prayer, mortification and charity, the chief of all virtues, after exciting to a tender confidence in the powerful intercession of the glorious Virgin Mary, Queen of Heaven and pious advocate of all poor Christians: the Holy Father, raising his hands and eyes to heaven, implored on all his hearers and on all his children

throughout the world, its choicest benedictions. 'Turn again, O God of Hosts' he cried (we give the general tenour of his words) 'and look down from heaven and see and visit this vineyard, and perfect the same, which Thy right hand hath planted. Yes, look down and visit, and Oh, may Thy visit be not one of justice, to punish the wicked husbandmen, but one of mercy to convert and save them. Look down on their families and grant that they may ever be distinguished for their faith and their piety. Look down on the youth and may ever docility and piety be their brightest ornaments. Look down on the sentinels of Israel, the pastors of Thy people, give them zeal in promoting the glory and the salvation of their flocks. Look down on so many countries desolated by errors and incredulity and bring them back to Thy true religion. Look down in mercy on all Thy people throughout the world and save them from every danger, console them in all their afflictions and replenish them with the fulness of Thy heavenly graces and benedictions."

This is, as far as we are aware, the only contemporary account in the English language of the papal sermon, memorable in its day because it was not then the custom for the Roman Pontiffs to preach in the vernacular.

The same newspaper carries in another issue a further reference to our Blessed Founder. We quote from an article on the Roman nocturnal schools.[20] The early portion of the article on these schools deals with a Roman lawyer who at his own expense conducted night schools in Rome from 1830 onwards. This good man, whose name was the Avvocato Gigli, died in the 1837 cholera.

"But (the article continues) though he was dead, the work did not die with him, as the two schools, although interrupted by this calamity and deprived of their ordinary succours, passed into the hand of the Abate Pallotta (sic), a model of beneficence, who not only restored them to their pristine state but remitted the funds in the amount of the deficit sustained in the interval, exerted himself so much that the aids augmented and prevailed upon his parishoners who were subsidiaries of the *Cassa di beneficenza* to contribute two scudi a month in those places where the schools had been opened. By such pious industry he increased the revenue to 300 scudi, with which he was enabled to open a new school in the Via dell'Arancio. When he was obliged to leave Rome on account of his health, the Cardinal della Porta, then Vicar... took their interest greatly to heart... In order to increase the benefits greatly resulting, he decided to place them under the guidance of a man who might be their voluntary director and promotor, as was found in Monsignor Morichini, who having already assumed

[20] The Roman Advertiser 6.3.1847.

the direction on the instance of Pallotta, retained it with hearty willingness according to the wish of the Cardinal."

The Pallotti Papers contain several references to Cardinal Acton, the Neapolitan-born scion of the famous British family of that name. Charles Januarius Acton, who was educated, in part, in England, where he attended Magdalen College, Oxford, served the Papacy as a jurist, in which branch of learning he became eminent. He was also an extremely charitable man and we gather from the Pallotti Letters (Lett. 1252), that our Blessed Founder availed himself of this trait in order to succour needy persons. Cardinal Acton was also one of the Procurators of the Society of the Catholic Apostolate; that is, one of the persons who undertook to receive donations for the Society. It also appears from the Pallotti Papers that our Founder on occasion discussed the affairs of Catholicism in Great Britain with Cardinal Acton, with reference to the information which Melia was conveying to Pallotti from London. (Lett.. 1107, 1215, 1304). Cardinal Acton died in 1847, three years before the re-establishment of the hierarchy in England, a measure which he vehemently opposed when it was first mooted. [21]

Before we transfer our attention to another source of information, let us glance at the names of the English-language preachers engaged by Pallotti for the great Epiphany celebrations which he commenced in 1836 and which, with a few exceptions, have been carried out annually ever since. Later when we come to deal with the Pallottine tenure of the church of San Silvestro in Capite, we shall have to take up more fully the story of the English-language sermons in Rome in the nineteenth century. The list of English Epiphany preachers since 1840 is extant and has been published, down to 1920, in the official organ of our Society. [22]

1840. Monsignor Nicholas Wiseman, Rector of the English College.

1841. Bishop Baines, Vicar-apostolic of the Western District of Great Britain; Bishop Clancy, Vicar-apostolic of British Guiana.

---

[21] Life of Thomas Grant, First Bishop of Southwark, by Grace Ramsay, p. 71

[22] Analecta PSM, Vol. I, p. 569.

1842. John O'Reilly; Michael O'Sullivan; Monsignor Baggs, Rector of the English College.
1843. Bishop Whelan, Vicar-Apostolic of Bombay; John Sharples; Monsignor Baggs.
1845. Florence Hardinge Ivers; Monsignor James Brady, Australia; Monsignor Thomas Heydon, Vicar-General of Pittsburgh.
1847. Monsignor Paul Cullen, Rector of the Irish College; Tobias Kirby, Vice-Rector of the Irish College.
1848. Monsignor Thomas Grant, Rector of the English College; Ferdinand English, Vice-Rector of the English College; Alexander Grant, Rector of the Scots College.
1850. Bishop Hynes, Vicar-Apostolic of Guiana; Bishop Oliffe.

Three years are missing from this enumeration. In 1849, on account of the political situation in Rome, the Octave was not held and the lists for 1844 and 1846 have disappeared.

Some of these names have already appeared in our story. There can be little doubt that all these persons were acquainted with our Blessed Founder and that some of them were close friends.

Why precisely the first settlement of our Society in the English-speaing lands came to be made in the Clerkenwell district of London is an interesting story. The oldest post-Reformation Catholic chapel in London, the famous Sardinian Chapel in Lincoln's Inn Fields was the traditional centre of religion in those parts. In the sombre eighteenth century the celebrated Bishop Challoner lived thereabouts, and his congregation being already too large to be accommodated in the Embassy Chapel, and for other reasons, the Bishop was obliged to resort to expedients in order to accomodate them.

"Dr. Challoner (Vicar-Apostolic of London 1758-1781) was most zealous in the administration of his diocese; he established several new schools and he was the founder of the Charitable Society. At first he was accustomed to preach every Sunday morning to this Society, composed of poor and middle classes which assembled in a miserable and ruinous apartment in Clare Market. Thence they removed to a room almost as wretched among the stables in Whetstone Park, Gate Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields; and lastly after the Bishop had preached for a few weeks in the Sardinian Chapel there, he was silenced by the Ambassador, at the instance of the ministry. The Society then removed to a place, rather more commodious, in Great Turnstile, Holborn. The laws against Catholics were so severe at this time that it was a matter of great

difficulty for any one to practice his religion openly, and it was impossible for one professing that faith to undertake the education of youth or the keeping of schools, without being liable to perpetual imprisonment. *The Gentleman's Magazine* tells us that the laws were so severe, not to say un-Christian, that Roman Catholics were rendered incapable of inheriting by descent if any of the next-of-kin claimed the inheritance and even children abjuring the Popish faith and turning Protestants might thereby deprive their parents of their estates and reduce them to beggary. 'The time was" writes Father Price in his *Sick Calls* 'when it was felony to preach the Gospel; when Bishop Talbot was arraigned at a felon's bar for saying Mass; when the saintly Bishop Challoner used to meet a few of his persecuted flock at a public-house in Gate Street, Lincoln's Inn Field, hiring the apartment by the year as a club-room, and on the night of meeting, a sturdy Irishman at the door to admit none but the faithful with the appointed watch-word; how the same venerable prelate, thus pitifully bowed down by circunstances under cruel penal laws, came in coloured clothes and preached a little comfortable exhortation, much like his own series of meditations, and to save appearances, in case the Philistines should break in, with a pint of porter before him, which the good Bishop never tasted, but which was drunk reverently by one or other of the assembly as 'the Bishop's beer.'"[23]

The Sardinian Ambassadors and their staffs during the eighteenth century were Italians, but it is improbable that in Challoner's congregation there were more than a few scattered members of that nation; an occasional skilled artizan, perhaps, some musician, the personal servant of some nobleman who had made the Grand Tour and brought himself back a servitor from Italy. The era of Italian emigration to the British Isles did not set in till after the Napoleonic wars and a brighter day had begun to dawn for harassed believers in the Catholic religion in the British Isles. And when the Italians came, the Sardinian Chapel naturally became their religious headquarters.

Dr. William Poynter was Vicar-Apostolic of the London District from 1803 till 1827 and during his incumbency the Italian population of London, constantly growing, became a problem. The Bishop felt that these people, far from the familiar influences of their native land and their religion, would be better looked after by a priest of their own race. Accordingly he invited to London for this purpose the Rev. Dr. Angelo Maria Baldacconi, a priest from Siena who had been ordained in 1816. Dr. Baldacconi arrived in 1824 and was

---

23 London Catholic Missions, by Johanna M. Harting, p. 29.

appointed one of the chaplains of the Sardinian Chapel, where besides sharing in the ordinary work of the chaplaincy, he was placed in charge of the Italian colony.

"From that time till 1843 (Dr. Baldacconi wrote) I continued to look after my countrymen and at the same time to discharge my proportion of duty as a chaplain, in regard to the entire congregation, English as well as Italian. In the year 1836 I visited Turin and obtained from his Sardinian Majesty an increase in the annual dotation which since that time has been £ 150. It was my wish also to have procured the appointment of a permanent national priest in my place whose duty it should be to attend exclusively to the Italians, having been convinced from experience that it is impossible to do justice to those for whom the king's grant is intended and at the same time to take an equal share with the other chaplains in the general duties. I continued however till 1843 to discharge this arduous task, to the great injury of my health, but at that time while in Rome and during my visit to Turin and as well subsequently in correspondence with the Count Solaro, I have had the satisfaction to bring the negotiations to the desired conclusion." [24]

Rev. Dr. Baldacconi ,after his withdrawal from the Sardinian Chapel, took up duty in St. Mary's Church, Newport, Monmouthshire, where he built a Catholic school. In 1851 he was transferred to Gosport, where he ministered to the local congregation and simultaneously served as chaplain of the Royal Naval Hospital in that place. His death occurred, while celebrating Sunday Mass, on the 24th of May, 1868.

Rev. Dr. Baldacconi's successor at the Sardinian Chapel was Fr. Raphael Melia, Blessed Vincent Pallotti's first recruit for the Society of the Catholic Apostolate. It appears from Dr. Baldacconi's statement, of which we have already quoted a portion, that Fr. Melia was to act exclusively as Italian Catholic Chaplain at the Sardinian Chapel. Baldacconi goes on to say:

"Dr. Melia now fills and most deservedly the post in that precise capacity which I laboured to ensure for my successor and I am sure my countrymen at least will allow me to feel truly gratified at witnessing this result of my earnest, indefatigable and persevering labours in their cause." [25]

Raphael Melia was a native of Rome he was born on the 6th of May, 1804. In this city he made his ecclesiastical stu-

---

[24] The Tablet, 7.12.1844.
[25] Ib. l.c.

dies and took his doctorate of theology with such distinction that, in accordance with the practice, he was awarded a life pension for his prowess . An unsual custom, this, which is elucidated by Dr. Jeremiah Donovan in his valuable work on Rome:

> "The (Roman) University confers the degree of Bachelor, Licentiate and Doctor, that of Bacholor after the first year's study, that of licentiate after the second and third, and that of Doctor after three examinations in the department of science in which it is sought. The Doctorship is of three sorts, *ad honorem, ad praemium* and *in forma communi.* The *ad honorem* and *ad praemium* entitle even foreigners to a small annuity of about thirty crowns and to exemption from all fees, but the *ad honorem* further secures the restitution of all fees already paid; and without the Degree of Doctor no one is eligible to a vacant Chair in any University or College within the Pope's dominions." [26]

Raphael Melia had first employed his great priestly and theological talents in the College of the Propaganda, where Pallotti was, since 1833, the Spiritual Director. In 1837 he resolved to fulfil a design he had been thinking over for some time: to throw in his lot with Pallotti definitively, for our Founder had now made it known to his intimates that the great ideal of the Catholic Apostolate, which he had formulated in 1835, required for its execution an association of priests who would devote their lives to the enterprise. On the 13th of August, 1837, Melia entered the Society of the Catholic Apostolate and took up residence in the first headquartes of the community — the clergy house of the Church of the Holy Ghost in Via Giulia. There were others before him — but he was the first to persevere till the end.

There is of course no incompatibility between the ideals of the Catholic Apostolate and the general missionary ideal. Quite the contrary, in fact. Melia after much meditation and some hesitation induced by the fear lest his frail health should prove an obstacle, came to the conclusion that he was himself called to the missionary life. As he surveyed the field, he felt a strong attraction to a great enterprise, which has challenged so many holy men down the centuries since the Reformation, namely, the conversion of England. He made his conclusions known to Pallotti and asked his permission to undertake the study of the English language in order to fit

---

[26] Rome Ancient and Modern, 111, p. 937.

himself to become a missionary in Great Britain. This permission, though it would entail depriving himself of his most promising collaborator, was cheerfully given by our Blessed Founder. Melia was advised by Pallotti to undertake this study, leaving aside other matters not so urgent, and the permission was granted "with all the merit of holy obedience." In the month of September of the year 1844 Raphael Melia set out for London from Rome, in accordance with the arrangement made with Dr. Baldacconi, who, as we saw above, had been visiting Rome the previous year. On his way north, Melia stopped in Turin. While in that city he met a young priest who became interested in the Society of the Catholic Apostolate. This was Dr. Giuseppe Faa di Bruno, member of an ancient family whose ancestral domains were located near the city of Alessandria. Dr. Faa di Bruno resolved to go to Rome and offer his services to Pallotti and Melia continued his journey to England. His arrival in London was noted in the Tablet of the time in these flattering terms:

> "A very distinguished priest, M. l'Abbe de Melia, a model of the Roman clergy — has been appointed to perform in part the functions lately discharged by the Rev. Dr. Baldacconi. The piety, learning and amiability of the Rev. Dr. Melia are highly spoken of in our letters from Rome." [27]

The Sardinian Chapel was, as we have seen, the spiritual headquarters of the London Italians. The Chapel served simultaneously as a London parish but this arrangement, under which two congregations were using the same building, was not satisfactory.

> "It was found difficult to unite, in the same place of worship, an English and an Italian congregation. The Germans and the French have separate chapels, in which prayers and instructions are habitually pronounced in their own tongue. Instead of sermons in the Mass, as the Italians are accustomed to have in their own country, it was necessary to assemble them in the afternoon, to give them religious instruction. There are days too which they are more used to keep holy, devotions which they are more familiar with, than we are in England. Many other inconveniences were felt which arose from discrepancy of national customs, language and feeling." [28]

---

[27] Tablet, 26.10.44.
[28] Dublin Review, Sept. 1851, p. 233.

Fr. Melia, commenced his apostolate in England by devoting himself to the care of his countrymen in and about London. But it would be a mistake to think that he intended to limit himself to this. We have alluded earlier to his study of the English language, a fact which goes to show that his original objective was to take a share in the conversion of the English nation to Catholicism, and, as he surveyed his field of action during the first months of his residence in London, his mind was fixed on a wider objective than the spirtiual care of the London Italians. He made his anxieties known to our Blessed Founder, who in answer, said as follows:

> "The picture which you draw of the Catholics there, of Catholicism in danger and of the Protestants in that country, is a very sorrowful one." [29]

In the same letter, which was written on the 10th of April, 1845, Pallotti suggests that a house be found, which might be adapted as a church and residence for the priests simultaneously; he next mentions that he has taken up the matter with the Piedmontese Minister in Rome. From which it would appear that Fr. Melia was already conscious of the difficulties in the way of his apostolate amongst his own countrymen, arising the lack of a church. That it was not, however, his intention to devote himself exclusively to this task is also shown by a letter which he wrote at this very time (May 6th, 1845) to his friend the famous Dr. Gentili:

> "All this year (he writes) I will devote myself to the Italians; next year I must devote pat of my time to the English." [30]

Were these London Italians very numerous, and what were their occupations? According to a careful estimate made in 1851 by a writer in The Dublin Review, the number of Italians in that year amounted to "nearly, if not quite, five thousand." We would be safe, therefore, in concluding that when Dr. Melia commenced his apostolate amongst them, five years earlier they were somewhat less. As regards their occupations, the writer in the Dublin Review goes on to say:

> "A certain number consist of mere itinerants; but there is a large class of industrious residents, many of whom employ many

---

[29] Lettere 1107.
[30] Domodossola Archives, Fathers of Charity, Italy.

hands, generally of their own country. And if we add foreigners of other nations, residing in and near the city, we may safely increase the number to seven or eight thousand. These foreigners have been, in many instances, for years established here, carry on lucrative trades and pay their share of imposts to the State and to local demands. They have, indeed, almost become incorporated with the inhabitants, and their next generation, in many cases, will only be distinguished from them by the Italian names they bear." [81]

There were two occupations in which many of the London Italians were engaged, which attracted some attention: organ-grinding and ice-cream vending — picturesque touches in the drab streets of early-victorian London. The owners of the itinerant barrows on which their musical implements and ice-cream containers were mounted required the services of young boys to assist them, either by "taking round the hat" or by handing over the merchandize to the customers. The allegation came to be made that the owners of these businesses, known as the *padroni,* were accustomed to hire little boys in Italy, or buy them outright from their parents in that country, bring them to England and exploit them unmercifully. Cases were brought into court, in support of these allegations. But humanitarian vigilance soon became complicated with religious bigotry. Interest in the human rights of the little Italian boys shaded off into measures designed to deprive them of their Catholic religion, in which they were born, educate them as good little Protestants, and even — a wilder dream, this — use them as a sort of spearhead for the conversion of Italy to evangelical Protestantism! For these purposes a school was established, as we learn from the following quotation from The Times:

> On Saturday a meeting of an interesting character took place at the chapel of the Hon. and Reverend Baptist W. Noel, John Street, Bedford Row, to witness the examination of the Italian pupils educated at the Protestant establishment of poor Italian boys at Warren-Street, Pentonville. The Hon. and Reverend Noel addressed the assembly at considerable length and referred to the cruelties practiced towards Italian boys who were sold by their parents to bad Italians and by them transported to this country to impose upon the benevolent public. A house of refuge was opened for them seven months ago in which they were fed, clothed and instructed, and into which the children of poor Italians resident in London are also admitted — the Bible being the basis of

[31] Dublin Review, 1. c.

their education and the theme of their lessons — and when arrived at a proper age they would be taught a trade. There were eight boys at present partaking of the benefits of the institution." [32]

It was a serious charge, made in public by a more or less responsible person and supported by no less an authority than *The Times*. The challenge was taken up in the name of religion and country by Fr. Raphael Melia, who drew up and sent out a circular letter to his compatriots:

"There never has been in the English church a persecution more dangerous for souls than that which is now excited against the poorer and simpler of your countrymen... At the present time the persecution is limited and is aimed principally against foreigners. We Italians are the special object of it and against us are used arms more fatal as they are less apparent: no longer do force, the sword or fire but money, craft and seduction now conspire for our ruin; no longer is the power and rage of the great ones raised against us, but the sensibility of the tender compassion of ladies. A cry is raised against the pretended cruelty of Italians towards their boys in order to separate the latter from them and to commit the greatest of cruelty by trying to tear from the docile hearts of the poor, the inexperienced, misled Italian boy, the faith of his fathers and of his country." [33]

Dealing with the allegation of inhumanity as supposedly practiced by parents and "padroni," Fr. Melia goes on to say:

"It does not belong to me to contradict so black a calumny agaist these Italians as you yourselves know it has several times in the public tribunals been unmasked and turned to shame of the unjust accusers. It is for me only to point out to you the cunning of the arts which are used to obtain money and to mask wicked ends of the new institution, the shame of the Catholic name, the grievous loss of souls and the dishonour and obloquy of the Italian name itself." [34]

Fr. Melia then goes on to refer to a more painful aspect of anti-Catholic propaganda amongst the Italian Catholics of London.

"Not only are snares spread for the children and lads; adults and the aged poor are also the objects of them. There are all day going round from door to door certain Italian *wolves* fed by

---

[32] Times, 25.2.1845.
[33] Tablet 12.4.45.
[34] Tablet 1. c.

Protestant philanthropy who with refined art and composed and devout appearance, with the meekness and resignation of Capuchin friars, would alienate from the Catholic Faith the Italians resident in London. It is true that very often they have received chastisement and run the risk of leaving their claws in the act of striking their prey. It is true that they have been disconcerted, silenced and put to flight from houses whose doors have been closed to them; it is true they are commonly held in abomination and approbrium (and for this you merit all praise) but permit me to recommend you, for your good, to avoid as far as possible, as the Apostle Paul advises, even the encounter with people of this kind because their breath is pestilence and their vicinity contaminates." [35]

Fr. Melia then advises his countrymen to support the Italian Free Catholic School in Leicester Place, Saffron Hill, in which there were at least one hundred and forty children. We shall hear of it again.

The *wolves* to whom Melia alludes above were three apostate Italian friars who were ranging around London at this time. The Tablet, in the issue from which we quote, states that one of these personages was proposing to found a school in the docks area and warns readers against him. These unfortunate men continued to trouble the waters for a long time and new recruits, lamentably, turned up to the shame and distress of the Catholics, and the eventual embarassment of their temporary patrons, for the weeds from the Papal garden are not wont to turn into flowers. It is indeed strange how patrons are never lacking in these cases. The simplest explanation would be that religious hatred dies hard, even in gently-nurtured breasts and that the apostates, good haters themselves, knew how to whip it up and make it productive.

> "A meeting was held last Friday in Hanover-Street, consisting chiefly of ladies, presided over by the Hon. W. Cowper MP. This personage in the course of his address heartily abused the Pope and openly declared that the purpose (of the Society for the Welfare of poor Italian Boys) is to convert the Pope. Sr. Rafael Ciocci, Secretary of the Society, described the Pope and the clergy of Italy as Thugs..." [36]

This Ciocci was an unfortunate Roman monk who fled his convent and set up in London. A few months later we find our Founder taking a hand in an effort to reclaim him. [37]

---

[35] Ib. Ic.
[36] Tablet, 11.4.46.
[37] Lett. 1304.

For years these people persisted in making trouble and we would forbear to mention them at all were it not the case that their misguided efforts had a bearing on the eventual building of the Italian Church of London. The connection is made clear by the following paragraph in the Tablet:

> "Although the want of an Italian church in London has long been felt, this undertaking now becomes an imperative necessity. The Italians of London are exposed to continual spiritual danger in consequence of the vigorous and unceasing efforts of several Italian apostates, who have opened two temporary Italian churches in London — which they call Catholic." [38]

---

[38] Tablet 29.6.50.

CHAPTER II

As may be gathered from the extract given at the end of the last chapter, Fr. Melia gave his support and encouragement to the Free Italian Catholic School at Saffron Hill. It was the custom to provide the scholars with an annual outing, and on one occasion — in 1846 — the great Daniel O'Connel went with them to Gravesend. The Maidstone and South Eastern Gazette made a Report of the proceedings, which lasted till nine at night.

> "Mr. Daniel O'Connell said at the time, that the Italian School was established in 1842 by Dr. Baldacconi and in the beginning it had forty boys; it was now extended into an evening school for those who work during the day; only Italians are admitted. There are now two hundred boys. Dr. Melia, in proposing the health of Daniel O'Connell said that it was singular that the health of one of the most eloquent men of the age should be proposed by one of the least eloquent; that one of the most ignorant of the English language (Dr. Melia is an Italian, and was imperfectly heard) should have to speak on the merits and virtues of a man, to whom the most learned men in the language could scarcely do justice. Dr. Melia said that he felt that little need be said by him to recommend the toast to their notice for he fancied that he heard the voice of the Irish nation calling on them to drink to the father of their nation. (Cheers). He thought he heard the voice of the Catholics, not only of Ireland, but of England, hailing him as the Liberator to whom they were indebted for their emancipation. (Cheers). He thought he heard the friends of civil and religious liberty beseeching them to drink the health of their warmest advocate; and he thought that he heard another voice, a small voice it might be, yet not the less a grateful one — the voice of the poor children of the Italian school, crying: 'Drink the health of Daniel O'Connell, our benefactor and our friend! (Great cheering). The toast was drunk with entuhiasm." [1]

Fr. Melia was too modest in his disclaimer regarding his knowledge of the English language. A few weeks before the date of the outing graced by Daniel O'Connell, Fr. Melia had a lengthy communication published in the columns of The

---

[1] Tablet 15.8.1846.

Tablet in which he dealt with the recent election of Cardinal Mastai-Ferretti to the Roman Pontificate. The article is in the form of a biography of the new Pope. "I can tell you" he writes "that for many years I have known him and have on several occasions dined with him and spent some hours with him." The respect and appreciation which Melia had for the Cardinal-Bishop of Imola was mutual. Many years later, when the news was brought to Pius IX that Fr. Melia had passed away, the venerable old Pontiff remarked: « un uomo pio » — a man of piety.

A few weeks later Fr. Melia again enters the columns of the same newspaper, this time with a translation of a letter from an Italian correspondent, containing details of changes made by the new Pope in the Papal administration.

Amongst the collected letters of Blessed Vincent Pallotti, there are twenty-five items addressed to Fr. Melia in London. They are full of revealing details of Pallotti's loving concern for his spiritual son, his advice on the practical details of missionary life and his profound interest in the conversion of England. The Oxford Movement had just issued in the conversion of Newman and some of his closest companions. It seemed to many people that their example might be followed by multitudes. Did it not behove the Catholic Church to be ready, not only to receive the crowds who might at any moment knock at the door, but also to fit them into the existing structure?

There were in 1845, just four priest members of the Society of the Catholic Apostolate, including the Founder himself. Pallotti had already permitted Melia to go to England and Providence had sent in his place the young Piedmontese priest, Dr. Joseph Faa di Bruno. Faa di Bruno came to Rome in order to examine the Society more closely, and he stayed at first with a friend at the Accademia dei Nobili and surveyed the Society of the Catholic Apostolate from the outside.

Tradition hands down his comment on the scene. "The Society of the Catholic Apostolate is a busy organization," said Dr. Faa; "each man in it is expected to do the work of three." After seeing, he was conquered and went to live with the Society, which promptly set him to giving missions in the Roman campagna. But Dr. Faa, who spoke some English, felt he had a vocation to work for the conversion of England and after a retreat, the decision was made. "Fr. Ratti (the

Retreat Master), Fr. Faa and I have held a conference (writes Pallotti) and we have come to the conclusion that he must fulfill his vocation for the English Mission... He is prepared to go whenever I determine."[2] Not an easy decision for our Founder to make, since his followers were so pitifully few. In a later letter to Melia he confesses that he was several times strongly tempted to keep Faa in Rome, but apostolic generosity prevailed. Dr. Joseph Faa di Bruno arrived in London early in 1847, and, after assisting Dr. Melia to preach a Mission for Italians in the Sardinian Chapel, was appointed spiritual director and professor for a group of converts headed by Faber.

Frederick William Faber, Anglican vicar of Elton, followed Newman into the Catholic Church one month after the great leader of the Oxford Movement had made his submission. While still an Anglican clergyman Faber had signalized himself for his efforts to spread Catholic practices and devotions amongst his parishoners at Elton and his friends, the parsonage serving as a sort of monastic establishment. Several friends and devotees followed him into the Church. They were anxious to resume the quasi-religious life they had led before, under Faber's leadership. A house was secured in Birmingham and by the end of 1845 the brotherhood was established there. Some of the members proposed to train for the priesthood; others for profession as religious brothers. The founder, early in the year 1846, not yet in priest's orders, went off to Italy on a pilgrimage and in Florence drew up the Rules of the new society, which was dedicated to St. Wilfred and was known as the Brotherhood of the Will of God. The offer of a church and residence at Cheadle made by Lord Shrewsbury, the last Catholic holder of that earldom, led to the removal of the community of the Brothers of the Will of God from Birmingham to Cotton Hall, Cheadle, in September 1846.

Here were men training for the priesthood and the religious life; enthusiastic ,devout and learned but without any practical experience of the religious life and its long traditions amongst Catholics; unacquainted too with the inherited ways of their new Catholic brethren and perhaps impatient with them.

One of their number, Father Anthony Hutchison, recalls

---

[2] Lett. 1107. Lo.4.45.

their outlook and their attitudes in a Mss. preserved in the archives of the London Oratory.

> "There were three abstinence days a week and a breakfast of bread and tea without sugar was taken standing. The Divine office was said in choir daily. The use of the discipline in their own rooms was encouraged and there were constant tridui and novenas. Their purpose was to ignore the existence of Protestantism and to live as though they were in Italy. The devotion of Maria Desolata was observed every week on Friday evenings, and in those early days, perhaps owing to our first fervour we seemed to live in the company of the saints and the Maddonna. We led a most unworldly life and I do not think it was unreal, notwithstanding perhaps a little occasional eccentricity." [3]

The responsibility for the training of these enthusiastic good men fell upon Bishop Wiseman, who, observing the italianate bent of the community and being himself a great believer in the excellence of Italian clerical training, felt that a sensible Italian ecclestiastic should be appointed to look after these ardent souls in Cotton Hall. After consulting with Lord Shrewsbury and Faber, Wiseman decided to invite Fr. Raphael Melia to undertake the task, as we learn from a letter written on the 29th September, 1846 (Lettere a Pallotti, Melia).

It is part of the rule of the Institute of the Brothers of the Will of God, Melia states, that the members must know Italian; the work that they propose to do and the spirit which animates them is quite similar to the ideal of the Catholic Apostolate. He mentions that he has paid a visit to Cotton Hall to see for himself, and he is much inclined to fall in with Wiseman's request, but is undecided what to do; one solution would be for Dr. Faa di Bruno to come to England for the purpose; another would be for Melia to spend three months in Cotton Hall, and then three months in London, and then another three months in Cotton Hall.

On the 13th of December of the same year Father Melia writes again to Pallotti expressing his joy at the news that Faa is coming to England, and, in order to avoid misunderstanings, he points out that the Superior of the Cotton Hall establishment is Faber and that the Italian priest is to occupy the post of Director of studies and Spiritual Director, and that the post will last for eighteen months. [4] Three weeks

---

[3] Oratory Notes, mss.
[4] Lettere a Pallotti: Melia.

later he writes again to say that Dr. Faa has arrived in London and that he and Melia are to preach a mission to the London Italians. As regards the Cotton Hall appointment he states that were Pallotti in England, he, Melia, feels that Pallotti would advise him to stay in London and direct Faa to proceed to Cotton Hall, but he is anxious to proceed in conformity with obedience. "Even if London presented itself to me as a Paradise, I would regard it as Hell so long as I was living in it not by virtue of obedience."

Dr. Faa di Bruno arrived in Cotton Hall late in January.

> "Last Monday (writes Faber to Lord Shrewsbury) I was summoned suddenly by the Bishop. I brought the Abbate Faa back with me — *un vero santo.*" [6]

In answer, apparently, to a question from Lord Shrewsbury, Faber writes a few days later.

> "As to Abbate Faa (as he is spelt) he comes from Rome and brings us the Apostolical Blessing; he is a fast friend of the Abbate Melia and a learned theologian, in which capacity I suppose he will stay with us till he is tired..." [7]

The Abbate found himself involved in a little domestic crisis a day or two after his arrival, as we learn from another of Faber's letters to Lord Shrewsbury:

> "At about nine this morning I was washing some corporals in the study, as subdeacon. Mr. Kennedy came to announce his room was on fire..." [8]

Faber goes on to explain that *of course* he continued with his task, and when he had finished it, went to investigate.

> "As soon as I discovered that the *house* was on fire, two brothers, the Abbate and myself removed the Blessed Sacrament with torches, surplices, veil and all formalities." [9]

It was not, fortunately, a very big fire.

We learn from another letter from Melia to Pallotti (Lettere a Pallotti: Melia, 20-2-47) that Dr. Faa was soon busily engaged in the general ministry, for he reports 20 First Com-

---

[5] Id. 7.1.47.
[6] Faber Letters, Vol. 22, no. 22, Oratory Archives, London.
[7] Id. Vol 21, no. 22a.
[8] Father Faber, by Ronald Chapman, p. 162.
[9] Ib.

munions and nine converts under instruction. "The establishment" Melia comments "can be very useful in breaking up the English ice."

Reporting to Pallotti Dr. Faa mentions that he will commence his theology lessons in Cotton Hall after Easter, and that his pupils will be four. And in another letter in the same series, he informs Pallotti that he has now commenced to preach in English and is lecturing in theology. And he goes on to mention the following interesting fact: that Fr. Dominic the Passionist (the Venerable Dominic Barbieri, CP, who received Newman into the Church) is preaching a retreat at Cotton Hall; "this is the Fr. Dominic who assisted your mother on her deathbed."

On Christmas Eve, 1847, Dr. Newman returned to England from Rome, with papal authority to erect a Congregation of the Oratory in England. Fr. Faber and his companions, who were preparing to make their vows in the Brotherhood of St. Wilfred, resolved instead to seek affiliation with the Oratory, which was granted to them in February 1848, and so the Brotherhood of the will of God (the clerical wags of the period called it "the Brotherhood of the Will of Faber") went out of existence and Dr. Faa di Bruno's connection with it came to an end.

The number of English convert clergymen who desired to study for the priesthood was large and growing. Many of them were applying to Bishop Wiseman (who was now Pro-Vicar of the London District) and Wiseman, educated himself in Rome, wished to train them for their new careers according to Roman principles. We learn from a letter of Pallotti to Melia that Wiseman's plan was as follows:

> "Wiseman has written to Cardinal Acton that about one hundred and fifty miles from London it is desired to open an establishment where ecclesiastical training can be imparted to about forty persons, ministers, pastors and other converts lest detriment follow from lack of good ecclesiastical training, and he wishes me to go there, taking with me two other Roman priests. My lack of the proper dispositions would have led me to answer immediately in the negative but since it is not impossible for God to choose the weakest even in preference to the weak, I consulted

---

10 Lettere a Pallotti: Melia 20.2.47.
11 Lettere a Pallotti: Faa.
12 Ib. 15.10.47.

my Confessor, who answered: no, so I think no more about the matter..." [13]

In the letter from which we have quoted, Pallotti also writes about the possibiility of opening a branch of the Catholic Apostolate in London, which could take a share in the work of converting England. He is also eager to help in the creation of a World League of Prayer for England and he exhorts Melia to pray with him for the conversion of the learder of the Puseyites. "Preghiamo per il Capo della Setta dei Pesuiti (sic)."

During the course of the year 1847 the project of an Italian Church for residents of that nation in London appeared to mature and Fr. Melia, who had his eye on a good site in the Clerkenwell area, and some money in hand, resolved towards the end of that year to pay a visit to Rome in order to obtain the approval of Propaganda, as he had already secured the permission of the Pro-Vicar-Apostolic, Dr. Wiseman. On December 7th 1847, a document was obtained by Melia from Propaganda, recommending him to the Bishops of Italy and stating that the mission which for three years he had been carrying out in London had been undertaken under the auspices of the Propaganda. The Bishops of Italy were exhorted to assist Dr. Melia in his task of collecting funds for the purpose of constructing a church for Italians in London.

The Propaganda, being concerned with the Missionary countries did not have jurisdiction in Italy. Its exhortation to the Italian Bishops was therefore supplemented by a Circular Letter to the Bishops of Italy, which was obtained by Melia, from the Cardinal Prefect of the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, Cardinal Orioli. This document was dated February 25th 1848 and earnestly requested all the Bishops of Italy to allow a collection throughout their dioceses for the proposed church in London.

Fr. Melia spent the winter in Rome occupied in these affairs and he proposed to return to England on their conclusion. Quite unexpectedly, he was appointed Vice-Rector of the Propaganda College. He was, of course, well acquainted with this establishment, to which he had given his services in the past, and with the Congregation on which the College depends. The explanation of this unexpected appointment

---

[13] Lett. 1215. 26.2.48.

partly lay the fact that just then the Jesuit Order, which for several years had been entrusted with the management of the Propaganda College, had withdrawn from it and the authorities felt it necessary to place experienced persons in charge after the change-over. It has also been suggested that the appointment was governed by another consideration: the long discussed question of the re-establishment of the Hierarchy in Great Britain had come once more to the fore and Melia's presence in Rome, in some official capacity connected with Propaganda would be useful. It is quite certain that Fr. Melia was "behind the scenes" in the discussions about the Hierarchy. In the Archives of the Rosminian Fathers there are several letters which he addressed to Fr. Gentili, from Rome, which show quite clearly that Dr. Melia was being consulted by the Roman authorities regarding the candidates for the various offices which were about to be created. Furthermore amongst the Wiseman Papers in the Westminster Archives we have found three letters from Melia to Wiseman, written from Rome, in which he keeps that prelate *au courant* with the course of affairs. Thus he writes on June 19th, 1848:

> "I hope this will be the last time that you will read on the envelope the title of Pro-Vicar, for we are on the vigil of the Heirarchy. All this week Propaganda has been working on England. Tomorrow the *ponenze* will be presented and a decision may be taken during the week... I have endeavoured to remove from the minds of some cardinals the fear that the Government might impede or take adverse measures..." [14]

And again on June 24th:

> "On Monday a special Congregation of Cardinals will be held at Propaganda for English ecclesiastical affairs... The *ponente* is Cardinal Mai and the others are Cardinals Ostini, Oriolo, Viggardelli, Castracane, Altieri and Franzoni. I do not think that there is any doubt but that Your Excellence will stay in London. I think it well to warn you that the Cardinals, it appears, are moved by the desire not to afflict Mgr. Walsh by appointing you immediately Archbishop. Walsh they say, is old and infirm and cannot last long and in a short time you would become Archbishop in full, if you are now appointed coadjutor-Archbishop. On the other hand we have letters here which state that Mgr. Walsh is incapable of assuming the post and hence I hope that a decision be made along the lines I desire..." [15]

---

[14] Westminster Archives, s.d. 19.6.48.
[15] Ib. s.d. 24.6.48.

In the event Mgr. Walsh died before the nominations became public, so that the issue never came to a head. It is a curious fact, however, that in another letter from Melia to Wiseman, of a later date (which letter is to be found in the Archives of the Irish Province in London) Melia addresses Wiseman as "Coadjutor Archbishop of Westminster." This letter is dated from Frascati, on the 27th September 1848. The document, written in Italian, is worth placing on record, for it contains two references to our Blessed Founder.

> "I make it my duty to acknowledge your Excellency's letter of the 13th, which I have read with great pleasure... I will communicate it to the Cardinal and I know that both he and the Secretary will have much pleasure. I will let you know the result but I flatter myself that I will be able to get Propaganda itself to acknowledge your letter. My brother and Dr. Faa have told me of your kindness to the Italian Sisters and your interest in the great project of the Italian Church. I wish again to thank you and also to express the satisfaction and the gratitude of the Abbate Pallotti. On the first occasion that I spoke to the Holy Father about the Italian Church, he stated his wish that it should be dedicated to the Prince of the Apostles and he arranged that the bassorilievo (a gift from the Holy See) should be placed behind the altar... Since the church is to serve the Italians, the English and other nations, a style of architecture pleasing to all will be selected... I hope to return in November, in order, amongst other things, to settle the foundation of the house in Kentish-Town, which, according to the arrangement made with Mr. Ivers, will be independent of him and ruled by a Rector who will treat with the Ordinary. It is the intention of the Abbate Pallotti to send there priests, for the most part English, who will be at the disposal of the Ordinary for Missions, Spiritual Exercises, Catechism and the Sacred Ministry in general. Mr. Ivers would retain, under this arrangement, *only* the Rectorship of the church. If your Excellency approves, I myself would wish to go to live in that house..."

We must now deal, at some length, with the projects and the personality of the Reverend Florence (sometimes called Fiorenzo) Hardinge Ivers. This personage was born at Kentish-Town in the year 1811 and was educated abroad; in the year 1845 he appears in Rome ,as one of the preachers at the Epiphany Octave of that year; in the list he is described as a priest of the Congregation of the Most Precious Blood. Fr. Ivers had the advantage of a biographer *in vita,* in the person of an Anglo-Irish journalist named Miles Gerald Keon who at one time resided in Kentish-Town, precisely during the period when Fr. Ivers was trying to establish the church of St.

Alexis there. This Mr. Keon composed for him a Life of St. Alexis, to which he added a lengthy introduction with biographical details about Fr. Ivers. Mr. Keon wrote very grandly, in the Augustan manner.

> "In his early youth (Fr. Ivers) was carried to and fro from one part of Europe to another, passing considerable intervals in the most renowned of the colleges abroad... He has grown up, if we may be allowed the expression, with half a dozen native languages in his mouth... After a considerable time spent in the high and important office of preceptor to the Royal family of Spain, he abandoned earthly dignities and entered the priesthood." [16]

Mr. Keon then relates how Ivers was in Lisbon in the year 1833 and, being on very friendly terms with the Fathers of the Society of Jesus in that city, was instrumental in saving their property from confiscation by allowing it to be put in his own name.

> "Hardly had he entered the priesthood when his well-known abilities and his high connections procured him some very advantageous offers on the part of certain ecclesiastical dignitaries in France; they invited him to pursue the clerical career in that country under their patronage and in stations not unindued even at the beginning with emolument and honour. But such a career was far from his taste. Rome, and Rome alone, could content him." [17]

The only facts we possess about his Roman career, besides the Epiphany service mentioned above, is that Fr. Ivers was the special preacher at the ceremony of a First Mass celebrated in the English College Chapel in 1843. The text of this sermon was published as a pamphlet and the author is stated to be living at the Church of Our Lady of Peace in Rome.

According to Keon, Fr. Ivers possessed some property in Kentish-Town and he appears in this place in 1846; desirous, according to a notice in The Tablet of building there a church in honour of St. Alexis. From a subsequent publication in the same newspaper it can be ascertained that Fr. Ivers' First Mass in Kentish-Town was celebrated on the Feast of the Assumption of that year.

Where celebrated? Possibly in one of the rooms of his house. It may be deduced from Keon's Memoir that this

---

[16] The Life and Times of the Roman Patrician Alexis, to which is annexed an Account of the Mission founded at Kentish-Town by the Rev. Hardinge Ivers. By Miles Gerard Keon. Derby 1847.

[17] Ib.

private chapel was soon thrown open to the Catholic residents of the neighbourhood. From various notices appearing from time to time in the Press, it appears that Fr. Ivers quickly gathered around him the nucleus of a congregation and that collections were taken up to enlarge this chapel and outfit a schoolroom. It was Fr. Ivers' habit to preach lengthy sermons to this congregation. So Mr. Keon tells us, adding that in his opinion these discourses suffered from the defect of being too far above the heads of the congregation; he himself felt, he states, some dislike for the "astute Italian theology" employed by the preacher.

We cannot determine what was the exact ecclesiastical standing of Fr. Ivers. It would appear that faculties were granted him by the Vicar-Apostolic Dr. Griffiths in 1846, whether temporary or permanent we cannot say. Nor have we been able to determine whether the Bishop commissioned him with the task of founding a regular mission in Kentish-Town. He claimed possession of a diploma of Missionary-Apostolic.

There is no doubt whatever that Pallotti and Ivers were acquainted. In a letter to Melia dated November 10th 1846 he sends greetings to the good Dr. Ivers, praying that God may bless his undertakings with the church [18] And two years later, on July lst 1848, he sends Ivers a Latin Letter. [19]

From the Pallotti-Melia Correspondence it is clear that Fr. Ivers wished to come to some arrangement with the Society of the Catholic Apostolate, by virtue of which his house in Kentish-Town might become a headquarters of the Society of the Catholic Apostolate. "Try to profit (Pallotti writes to Melia, on the 6th of June 1847) of the good dispositions of Fr. Ivers in order to prepare for the erection of a church and house of our Congregation." [20] The nature of Fr. Ivers' offer, and the difficulties in the way of its acceptance are clarified in a subsequent letter of September 14th 1847, in which Pallotti says the following:

> "God can do all things but at the present time I do not see the way to send Italian priests to the house and church of the excellent Fr. Ivers, and in case there were a delay in sending them and Fr. Ivers wishes to let his house, can he not do so for a fixed time? How many priests would be necessary? And perhaps with them a Brother Coadjutor? What would be the cost of furnishing

---

18 Lett. 1304. 12.2.46.
19 Lett. 1483. 14.7.48
20 Lett. 1352. 6.6.47.

this house? What would the maintainance of the community cost? Could alms be found there for this purpose? I would prefer Ivers house and church for it would allow us more convenience for our good works..." [21]

In the same letter our Founder remarks that he has received a communication from Fr. Ivers in which the latter requests that his church should be recognized as a Roman foundation and the appointment of Rector be reserved to the Holy See. Pallotti states that he has presented the request to His Holiness and that it has now been transmitted to Wiseman for his opinion. We do not know if this petition prospered; a statement made by Fr. Ivers during his tribulations later on inclines one to believe that it did. But what is certain is that Fr. Ivers, by a formal document dated July 6th 1848, issued by "The Rector-General of the Congregation of Secular Priests of the Catholic Apostolate, instituted under the title of the Blessed Virgin Mary Queen of Apostles" is named an Associate of the Catholic Apostolate and perpetual Rector of the church of St. Alexis in Kentish-Town.

The bas-relief of St. Alexis which is placed over the side-altar on the left-hand side of the church of San Salvatore in Onda, Rome, was originally Commissioned by own Founder for the Kentish-Town church but the situation changed before it could be sent.

It may be gathered from Fr. Melia's letter to Wiseman which we reproduced above, that the former expected to be able to come to some arrangement with Fr. Ivers which would secure our Society a place in Kentish-Town. This was not to be, yet Kentish-Town and Fr. Ivers had yet a part to play in Pallottine history.

The plan to open a house of the Society at Kentish-Twon, to which Pallotti alluded in the letter quoted above, seemed about to mature ,as the following notice in The Tablet indicates:

"One of the most remarkable symptoms of the present age is the increase of congregations and pious unions of secular priests, who, though bound by no vow whatever, live together after the fashion of the Apostles and primitive Church, devoting their lives to the labours of the apostolic ministry. Among the societies of this nature, founded of late years with the formal sanction of the Holy See, is that formed by Don Vincenzo Pallotti, a venerable priest

---

[21] Lett. 1395. 14.9.47.

living in Rome in the odour of sanctity. The Superior-General, D. Vincenzo Pallotti has given directions to Dr. Faa, who belongs also to this Society to join Mr. Ivers at Kentish-Town; and thus these ecclesiastics whose number will be increased as soon as circumstances may permit, will form the nucleus, it is hoped of what will prove in the course of years a flourishing branch of the Society. The Society of Secular Priests, founded by Don Vincenzo Pallotti, is under the special patronage of Our Lady Queen of Apostles..." [22]

Fr. Melia's absence from London covered the entire year 1848. When Fr. Faa di Bruno's engagement at Cheadle was terminated he began to work amongst the people of Kentish-Town. He went to stay with Fr. Ivers, under whose care was Barnet and in May 1848, the mission of Barnet was opened by Fr. Faa.

"It was deemed necessary (Dr. Faa wrote to the Tablet) that a mission should be opened at Barnet more on account of the great distance of that town from any chapel (which is not less than eight miles) than on account of the number of Catholics, which was not supposed to exceed twenty souls. But now there cannot any longer be any doubt of the importance and necessity of having here a permament mission since the number of Catholics is found to be not less than three hundred and in summer time it usually increases to six hundred. The attendance at Mass is also considerable, filling almost every Sunday three good-sized rooms and sometimes also the passage and part of the gardens." [23]

He goes on in the same letter to appeal for funds to construct a proper church, and alludes to the school which is already in being:

"More than thirty children are frequenting the school, several sick people have received the rites of our Holy religion in their last moments and many public disturbances have been prevented on account of the great change effected even amongst the most riotous of our people — to the great edification and gratitude of our Protestant brethren, who cannot help admiring the power of that holy religion which they have learned from childhood to condemn as superstitious. I hope therefore that this appeal which for the first time I attempt to make to the charity of the Catholics of England for the Mission of Barnet will not be regarded as of no importance or unnecessary."

The rental and repairs of the school-room, as well as the teacher's stipend were for long paid for by Dr. Faa out of

---

[22] Tablet 1.7.48.
[23] Ib. 8.9.48.

his own pocket. He continued for several years to look after the Barnet Mission till eventually the ecclesiastical authorities made other provisions for it. It is pleasant to recall that when the Centenary of the Mission was celebrated some years ago, the Rector made a point of inviting the Provincial of the Pallottine Fathers to celebrate the High Mass offered on that occasion, in remembrance of our part in the foundation of the Barnet parish.

Meanwhile Fr. Melia proceeded with his plans for acquiring a site for the future St. Peter's church and clergy-house. His choice was limited by the fact that the weight of the Italian population of London was at that time concentrated in Clerkenwell and its surrounding districts. Now these were the years when the Great Famine and its aftermath were relentlessly depopulating Ireland; when the bewildered inhabitants of that island fled in their millions from hunger and the dreaded fever; fled overseas, those of them who were lucky enough to be able to pay for a passage, even on a coffin ship, to the United States, to Canada, to South America; fled across the nearest water, where they were unwanted, resented and despised; saying goodbye forever to their people; not understanding the roots and reasons of the calamity which had come upon them; intuitively knowing that the causes of their distress did not lie within themselves and their country. These, or some of these, were the actors of that saddest scene of all Ireland's history, when the crape-hung vessel carrying home the body of Daniel O'Connell, crept into Dublin Bay and the out-going emigrant ship, crowded with the desperate exiles, crossed her path, and the long low heartbreaking keen moaned over the waters.

London, then, got its quota of these dejected poor people, who settled in thousands precisely in this uncoveted area of the great metropolis. There were no pre-existing churches or schools for these Catholic Irish, but plenty of gin-houses and dram-shops to absorb the scanty pennies left over after the children of despair had earned their bitter bread. But there were not lacking priestly men who did more than wring their hands; who faced the problem and did what in them lay to succour the spirit of this destitute people. In 1846 there was no Catholic church or chapel or school-house between St. Mary Moorfields and the Sardinian Chapel; five years later there were no less than three.

"Only a few years ago (wrote Fr. John Kyne) in the Clerkenwell and Saffron Hill area, there were 12 thousand people without a chapel, without schools, with literally nothing to build upon but poverty itself and where everything, so to speak, had to be created anew. All honour to the zealous Spanish missionaries Fr. Herrera and Fr. Ferrer, who had the courage to lay the foundation of a new mission. All honour to the late Fr. McLean and Fr. Woolett who struggled to maintain the mission in existence. Four years ago in the whole of Clerkenwell and Saffron-Hill there was only one chapel at the extreme end of the parish, two priests and three Masses. Now there are three chapels, five priests, nine Masses." [24]

The origins of the three chapels, mentioned by Fr. Kyne are bound up with the history and benefactions of a Mr. Charles Walker, whose death occurred in London on January 15th, 1872, when he was 72 years old. This Mr. Walker was descended from a Yorkshire recusant family which settled in London and earned fame and wealth as geographers to the Admiralty and the Governement of India .

"The private charities of the late Charles Walker were most numerous and administered with unwearied patience... His public benefactions to religion are believed to be within the range of £ 40,000 to £ 60,000. This will be more easily understood when we remember that he was the founder of so large a number of the London missions. The following churches were purchased or built entirely or in great measure by the deceased: St. Peter and Paul, Rosoman Street; St. Brigid's, Baldwin Gardens; The Holy Family, Saffron Hill..." [25]

Six more chapels are then enumerated. The first chapel on this list is the present St. Peter and Paul church, which in the nomenclature of London Catholic churches (so often called by the name of the street where they are situated rather than by their titles) is now called the Amwell-Street church; and in former times, the Rosoman-Street church. Its history is interesting. There is an obscure English Calvinist sect which sprang up in the 18th century, a branch of the original Methodist trunk, which became known by the curious title: 'The Countess of Huntingdon's Connection," in memory of one of its chief patrons. This sect possessed a chapel at Spa Fields in London, whose elders in 1835 decided to build another in the Clerkenwell area. The new venture was called the Northampton Tabernacle and its architect was a Mr. John Blyth.

---

[24] Ib. 26.11.53.
[25] Ib. 3.2.72.

It was found after a short time that the congregation was insufficient to maintain the Tabernacle, which was then sold, the purchaser being the Catholic Vicar-Apostolic of the London District. In 1847 the Tabernacle was re-opened as a Catholic Church, in a ceremony presided over by Bishop Wiseman, the Ambassador of Spain being the chief guest for the occasion.

This is the same building which is in use to this day. Its almost rectangular shape betrays its original purpose as a meeting-house; the placement of the altars shows, too, that the designer of the building had no such ornaments in view when he planned the edifice.

The first pastor of the new church was the Reverend Antonio Maria Herrera, a Spanish priest who had already worked in the district for several years, together with a compatriot, Fr. Ferrer, and Fr. McClean. Worn out by his work, Fr. Herrera set out for a holiday in Spain, but died on the way, at Bayonne, on the 28th of October, 1848. Fr. McClean was left in charge of the mission, but he too was removed by death in the month of May, 1850.

God's Providence from time to time has raised up a succession of apostolic priests who gave themselves to the cause of the London poor. Such a one was Fr. John Kyne, a native of Roscommon, where he was born in 1818, educated partly at Maynooth and partly at St. Edmund's College, Ware. From a country parish in Kent he was about this time transferred to Clerkenwell, where he seconded Fr. McClean and later succeeded him at St. Peter and Paul's.

> "He laboured (states the writer of his Obituary) with great energy and success amongst his poor countrymen. At this time, the Vicar-Apostolic, Fr. Griffiths was very anxious to form a mission in the very centre of the thickly-populated district about Gray's Inn and he offered this great work to a Religious Order who were then wishing to establish themselves in the metropolis, but the offer not being accepted, Fr. Kyne threw himself into the work with great devotedness and formed a new mission at Baldwin's Gardens. Here he might be seen in the midst of the courts almost every evening, preaching in the open air to the crowds assembled to hear his earnest discourses, and his zeal was rewarded with wonderful success. In order to carry out more effectively this work, he was appointed head of the neighbouring mission of Clerkenwell and he formed another mission in a destitute part of this parish and built a small church on Saffron Hill". [26]

---

[26] Ib. 19.1.84.

Fr. Kyne continued his work in the area until after the outbreak of the Indian Mutiny, he went to India as a military chaplain. Returning after the Mutiny was quelled, with impaired health, he was appointed to Brentwood, where he was named parish priest and subsequently Canon of the Westminster Chapter.

Dr. Faa di Bruno emulated Fr. Kyne in many of his apostolic enterprises in and about Clerkenwell. On one occasion, he nearly lost his life.

> "Dr. Faa di Bruno was preaching a mission in a large coach factory, and on the Sunday night, August 4th, 1849, the room, situated in Charles street, Drury Lane, was densely crowded. This mission had attracted much curiosity from the novelty of its situation and locality and on that occasion fully one thousand persons were collected, many of them people of very rough character. Dr. Faa was in the midst of his sermon when a cry of "fire!" was raised from outside — a rush was made down the crazy staircase — the post which supported it gave way — the stairs fell with a crash and a hundred or more helpless individuals were hurled pell-mell upon each other to a great depth below; were trampled on, stunned and mutilated. The excitement was awful. The window was dashed out; several leaped a fall of thirty feet into the street; shrieks and screams filled the air. Dr. Faa thundered at the top of his powerful voice for the people to remain quiet and to stay with him. He held the crucifix on high and adjured them in the name of the living God to do so. Hundreds must have perished. The floor was weak and crazy, it was a very ancient tenement and all had rushed to the broken stair. The flooring would probably have been precipated into the yawning depth below, but five hundred obeyed his voice and remained. One of the resident clergy at the Sardinian Chapel has described the fearful scene he witnessed at King's College Hospital where he hastened to give partial relief to the sufferers. The priests remained until long after midnight, attending the dying and soothing the pains of the living with the mysteries of religion. The fire engine had arrived and a dense crowd of the lowest scum of London had gathered at the scene of the accident. Dr. Faa, with the ciborium in his hands, still dressed in his habit of religion with no hat upon his head, was hustled and driven by the mob and it was with the greatest difficulty he had reached a place of safety." [27]

The problem of providing churches and chapels for all these poor people was solved bit by bit by the opening of the three chapels: St. Peter and Paul, in Rosoman Street (1847); St. Brigid's, Baldwin's Gardens, which was opened about 1850

---

[27] London Catholic Missions. By Johanna Harting, p. 49.

— " a mean little chapel " — so a newspaper account described it on the occasion of an Italian mission preached in it at the end of 1851 by Fr. Melia; and the Holy Family Chapel on Saffron-Hill, opened on the Feast of St. Peter and Paul, 1854, by Cardinal Wiseman. The Holy Family chapel was on that occasion thus described: " a Gothic edifice, consisting of one nave, sacristy at the east end, at the west end a bell-turret, the altar in a recess ". With the exception of St. Peter and Paul's, in the present Amwell-Street, these chapels exist no longer, for St. Brigid's Chapel, after being served for a year from the Italian Church, was incorporated into the Italian Church parish in 1873, while the Holy Family Family chapel passed to the Rosminian Fathers in 1846 and its congregation was incorporated into St. Ethelreda's in 1874.

But the provision of churches was only a part of the problem; schools for the children were just as important. History records that here too Fr. Faa di Bruno and Fr. Melia did their part in providing this most necessary equipment for the Catholic poor in Clerkenwell. Thus we read of a meeting of Catholics of the area, held in Lincoln's Inn Fields to promote the education of the poor children of Catholics. Frs. Melia and Faa were present on the platform. A few months later (June 29th, 1850) in the same newspaper a " Grand Private Morning Concert " in order to collect funds for the new Italian church and School is announced. Tickets (half a guinea each) on sale with Dr. Melia and others. Some time later we read that Dr. Faa and Fr. John Kyne

> "have been engaged during this and the last week, in preaching in the courts and alleys of the popular districts around Gray's Inn. One of the chief objects of the missionaries is to impress on the people their duty to send their children to Catholic schools. " [28]

Dr. Faa's experiences during these missionary efforts created in him a deep conviction, to which he gave expression in a public speech, delivered in the Holy Family Chapel in Field-Lane, Saffron Hill, February 1855, which are well worth quoting:

> "Dr. Faa said that it was the pence of the poor which had mainly contributed to the erection and support of the Catholic missions, churches and schools throughout England, and it was a circumstance of which Catholics ought to be proud. To systematize that pious and generous zeal was the duty of the collectors. The

[28] Tablet 7.2.52.

missions owed much to the collectors. Careful and active collectors were most efficient agents in the good work of Catholic organizations." [29]

We are entitled to think that Dr. Faa's words as here recorded are an echo of the sentiments so often uttered by our Blessed Founder, regarding the necessity of establishing a closer co-operation between the clergy and the laity for the welfare and progress of the Catholic cause.

The Catholics in the district were, as we have pointed out above, mainly of Irish and Italian stock. There is an excellent description of these Italians, at just this period, by an anonymous correspondent in The Tablet, which in spite of its length is well worth quoting.

"The Italians moving in London present many strange peculiarities. There are no Italians occupying high positions because the few who have been raised up assume English manners and language and they soon become English. The properly called Italian people (in London) may be considered and divided into five classes of trades: 1) Cabinet and frame makers and carpenters; 2) street-organ players; 3) plaster-figure makers; 4) refugees and members of the Anglo-Italian League; 5) cheap confectioners miscellaneous workers and fluctuating people such as sailors, etc.; say two thousand in all divided nearly equally in those five parts, with a little excess in favour of the first few. These classes have very peculiar marks of division in regard of dialect, the parts of Italy they come from, exclusive addiction to their sort of trade etc.

Firstly carpenters, frame and cabinet makers are all from Lago Maggiore and Lago di Como. They live and work not even being known to the rest of them. They are not as quick as English workmen, but they never miss an hour of work from Monday to Saturday night late and at the end of the week they have much more work done than an English workman. They gain less than English people, but they have no extravagant expenses, and some of them can send money to their families in Italy. A pennyworth of tobacco on Sundays is their luxury; poor, not begging and happy in their state. The masters of thirty or forty men are happy to say that once they were poor workmen themselves. Some of the masters help in flower-making too, but some of this is done by English hands and cannot be called Italian work. The dialects of Como and Lago Maggiore are Italian sauced with a light mixture of German, the whole concealed in their peculiar accent which makes them very unintelligible to genuine Italians.

Secondly, street-organ people form a very different class from the above. You have to jump at once one hundred and fifty miles to Chiavari and Parma to see where they come from. Their dialect

---

[29] Ib. 24.2.55.

is more Italian than the above but their barbarous pronunciations and elisions, helped by an uncultivated education, make them difficult to be understood. They are good natured but not happy people. There are masters recruiting and hiring them for the sake of giving them an organ in London to play and beg with. Ignorance and discontent and unsuccess in Italy lead them to accept the offer and when they are in England they would return home but cannot because of the sea and so, they must go on and play and annoy the Londoners as well as themselves. Some of them pay sixpence or more or less according to its quality for the organ per day, and the rest, one shilling, is left to them for food, lodging and clothes. Some others have food, lodging and clothes from the master, but they must give up every evening what they have gained during the day. They like a glass of ale but you will never see a drunken organ-grinder. The organ-players of the country are a little better off. The masters of the London trade dress like their men and the only distinction is a silver watch-chain that they scarcely show in the opening of their greasy vest.

Thirdly, the figure-markers are the most jolly people, quite detached from the rest; they are all from Lucca." [30]

The article, we regret to say, was not concluded in subsequent issues of the same newspaper, so we are left lacking the vivid details which this author would surely have employed to characterize the remaining sections of Italian Londoners. Let us, however, give some attention of the fourth section, as planned by this writer — the refugees and members of the Anglo-Italian League. This was the hey-day of political and social ferment amongst the peoples of the various Italian principalities; the Republicans, the anti-clericals, the secret society men and the carbonari. England was a great haven for such of these people as had made their native places too hot to hold them, so it is not to be wondered at that there were hundreds of them spread out in little pockets here and there in the great metropolis, unable or unwilling to earn their keep and live in the comfort to which they felt entitled because the great language barrier lay between them and modest prosperity; nor would their burning ideas allow them to live like ordinary people. The strange islanders amongst whom they found themselves, uncritically offered shelter, and sometimes money to such comers as could allege they had run up against the authorities of their own states; they were allowed to plot and plan against the thrones and the altars of their native lands, so

---

[30] Ib. 27.12.57.

long as the results of their conspiracies did not disturb the local peace.

One fairly common denominator of the Italian fuorusciti of the early nineteenth century was their anti-clericalism, a fact which did not make them unpopular to the lingering mood of large sections of the British population, among whom the shibboleths of priestcraft, Romish superstition and so on were still powerful words. Evangelical societies, fanatical ladies of fashion and others were always ready to welcome the odd wretched Italian priest, like the infamous Achilli and Gavazzi, who, having soiled their record at home, fled to hospitable and undiscerning England and presented themselves as brands snatched from the fire, and oh! so willing to start other fires in the gloomy regions where the wicked Pope and his myrmidons still stoked the blazes of the Inquisition. The English language, as well as the good sound sense of the English people, has always been a barrier placed right across the paths of such excitable apostles; it is not therefore to be wondered at that they should turn their tongues on the few thousands of their countrymen sharing the city with them and in particular we need not wonder that the priests (not only Italian priests, but all priests) who offered leadership to these poor people, should be the special target of their wrath.

> "At the mission given in Baldwin's Gardens (we have noted the date above) some "converted" Italian roughs made trouble and attacked an Italian priest who was resident at the Rosoman-Street church. The rumour also went round that Dr. Faa had been attacked."

To the same church of St. Brigid's, there came an Irish priest some months later who took a dim view of this continental anti-clerical propaganda and its successes around Baldwin's Gardens; he made his dislikes plain to his parishoners. One day in the month of July of the year 1853 he became involved in a street riot, whose causes and circumstances he very willingly explained in court.

> "I was on a sick-call and suddenly found myself surrounded by hundreds of my parishoners, whose purpose was to attack a low Italian lodging-house, to take vengeance on a dozen Mazzini Italians who continually, for the past eight months have insulted the priests... One Sunday eveninng three ruffians jostled Fr. Gilligan off the path and the Irish Catholics resolved to put a stop to this." [31]

---

[31] Ib. 16.7.53.

He was not prepared, Fr. John O'Connor — for such was his name — went on to say, to submit to insults which no free-born man, whatever his profession, could be expected to endure and he was grateful to his people for standing up for him.

But it is not fair to blame a nation for the faults of a few misguided individuals. Fr. John Kyne from his parish in Rosoman-street, addressed a letter to the Tablet in which he warned that these scenes were being deliberately provoked in order to stir up bad blood between the Italian and the Irish Catholics of the area.

> "After my own dear Irish people (he wrote) there are no people on the face of the earth for whom I have more sympathy, or for whom I have a greater love than the Italian Catholics." [32]

Let us return now to the negotiations conducted by Dr. Melia for the erection of the Italian Church, which he had had in mind since his arrival in England. The reader may remember that we left this topic aside for the moment when we went a little more fully into the career of Fr. Hardinge Ivers. Melia, then, spent the year 1848 in Rome, as Vice-Rector of the Propaganda College, immersed in the business of the creation of the Hierarchy. But neither he nor Pallotti lost sight of the immediate objective, and on June 18th 1848, Pallotti addressed a petition to the Holy Father, in which he states that the priests of the Catholic Apostolate are presently collecting funds for the Italian Church in London. And he goes on to ask that the church which it is hoped to erect should never pass from the ownership of the Society of the Catholic Apostolate.

> "In order to insure that this church be erected and conducted after the Roman fashion, and that it be secured for the purpose of its foundation, Fr. Vincent Pallotti, Rector of this Congregation and Society, humbly prays Your Holiness to grant that the ownership, direction and administration of the properties of this church should belong to this Congregation as long as it continues to exist and has members fitted for the task; and should it cease to exist, or to possess fitting subjects, the Holy See will itself provide otherwise..." [33]

To this request the Holy Father returned a favourable answer, in an Audience granted on the same date.

---

[32] Ib. 23.7.53.
[33] Lett. 1477. L8.6.48.

Fr. Melia came back to London in the month of February of 1849 intent on securing land for constructing the church which had so long been in his thoughts. Writing from Rome, Pallotti makes these reflections regarding church and house which he begs Melia to bear in mind, as surely they will be borne in mind by all Pallottines in similar circumstances:

> "In so far as it is possible, the Temple of God must shine with the Majesty of God and hence no artistry which could be an occasion for scandal must be used in it. In the priests' house, simplicity and poverty must be kept, but whatever is necessary for a well-ordered community must be provided; it must be built in the style of a residence for an ecclesiastical community. And since it may perhaps have to serve as the beginning of a College as well, it should be constructed with this in view as well..."

Fr. Melia was, we have seen, Chairman of the Italian Gratuitous Schools in London, and we have mentioned this custom of holding an annual outing to some spot near London. In this year, 1849, two hundred and fifty persons went with the outing to Erith ,travelling by boat. Amongst the distinguished guests were Dr. Wiseman and Miss Gladstone (sister of the future Premier, and a recent convert). The occasion deserves to be recalled, because at the end of the dinner, Dr. Wiseman proposed the health of the Sovereign Pontiff, a proceeding which at that time was unusual in England, as we gather from a leading article in a subsequent number of The Tablet, which quotes, with great commendation, Dr. Wiseman's gesture. The Prelate also referred to Fr. Melia, who of course was present. " We know, said Dr. Wiseman " that he is held in the greatest estimation by the Holy Father, who has often spoken of him to us." In his reply, Fr. Melia stated that the project of building the future Italian church was well advanced, and that he had nearly £ 1,500 towards it.

Back in Rome the Revolution was raging; priests and prelates were being insulted, struck and fired on in the streets; it was unsafe to walk abroad. Our Founder, at the insistence of his friends, had sought shelter in the Irish College, from which place the letter we quoted above was written. This letter contains another piece of information which is of much interest. Bishop Wiseman, as appears from a letter of Melia to Pallotti, was thinking of establishing a Foreign Missionary

---

[34] Lett. 1566. 16.5.49.

College in London and wished Pallotti to come to London in connection with it.

> "I rejoice greatly in God that Mgr. Wiseman wishes to establish the Missionary College; an enterprise which requires us to arm our souls against the Enemy and therefore let us submerge ourselves in the abyss of our nothingness and indignity, and God will do everything; I admire the virtuous trust of the good prelate, who desires that I should go there and admire the works of God; should God will it, He will arrange so that I can go; but at present I cannot go, and in any case if God does not will it, then I can be sure that at least God does not wish to employ me as an impediment to good. The house, which the Bishop possesses four miles from London, should be secured, if you agree; although subjects are lacking at this time, if God gives us the house, it will be a sign that He will send subjects as well..."

After our Founder had drawn up the part of the letter from which this extract is taken, he received another letter from Melia, dated May 4th, which dealt again with the question of Pallotti's possible journey to London. He then added a long postscript to the already-prepared letter, and after alluding to Mr. Tempest's insistent desire to carry him off to London (quoted above, when mention was made of this Mr. Tempest,) Pallotti goes on to say:

> "You know that Azaria's answer was negative (Azaria is Pallotti's Biblical substitute name for Fr. Pascali, his confessor); the charitable tempest having grown in violence, I entrusted the affair to prayer, and, bearing in mind that my departure for London was not a matter for me alone, but involved me as a member of the Congregation, and its affairs, I proposed that it should be taken up in council, and in my absence it was decided in the affirmative. Dr. Francesco (Vaccari) however states that before leaving I should clear up several matters put aside owing to the present circumstances, but for the present there is nothing I can do about them, nor can I leave here, and no one can, on account of the circumstances; nor is Azaria (his confessor) here to whom I could explain things and so have his approbation and blessing. In spite of all this I do not yet know what is God's Holy Will; because the abyss of misery which I am is so opposed to the sanctity, doctrine, skill and the other qualities required of me, were I to go thither and do good, as you seem to think, rather than evil, that it is necessary to make sure that is the will of God, Who can draw out good out of evil. Wherefore, pray, pray, pray." [35]

Owing to the postal interruptions occasioned by the occupation of Rome by the revolutionaries ,it was not safe to

---

[35] Ib.

trust letters to the ordinary channels. This letter was therefore entrusted to his good and faithful friend, Mr. Walter Tempest, to whom he sent the following note:

> "In three letters from London I am urged to go there speedily, even by Mgr. Wiseman. This charitable and zealous pressure means much to me. Therefore pray and have others as well pray. The enclosed has been ready for a month and a half and I venture to give you the merit of handing it over personally." [36]

Eight months after writing these lines Vincent Pallotti was called to his reward. In those items of his correspondence which have survived, no further mention is made of a possible journey to England, Had Providence spared him, would he, in accordance with the wishes of Wiseman, Melia, and other friends have gone thither? The discussion belongs to the region of the futuribles. His concerns in Rome were many and heavy: The infant Congregation, whose life and soul he was, the Pia Casa della Carità, which relied on him, the house he was about to open in Velletri, the Novitiate of the Congregation which he was hoping to establish in Santa Prisca. On the other hand there was his oft-manifested interest in the training and progress of the Oxford Movement converts and the conversion of England generally; his hopes for a Foreign Missionary College in England; his zeal for the establishment of the London house of the Congregation; the solicitude of his friends in Great Britain, who were insisting that there was work there which he could do and which made his presence necessary.

In the remaining months of his life, Blessed Vincent made two further interventions in the affairs of the London church and house. The first of these occurred when Fr. Melia, writing from London on the 22nd September of 1849, seeks authority to sign the contract for the site of the church and house which he was about to purchase. In his reply, dated October 23rd, Pallotti says:

> "I send you the letter regarding the contract, but you must be careful to proceed prudently, so that nothing be done without proper precautions; as would be the case if the contract were signed without having the money to pay for the site in hand, or without the guarantee of some pious benefactors; so that the honour of the Congregation may not be compromised. May God do everything' Trust in God! Remember the 17 baiocchi with which St. Ignatius commenced the building of St. Appollinare." [37]

---

[36] Lett. 1567. 16.5.49.
[37] Lett. 1622. 23.10.49.

In the event, this land, though contracted for, was not acquired after all. Fr. Melia explained why at a later date, apropos of a rumour circulated that the trustees of the Italian church had lost a sum of some hundreds of pounds for the purchase of land at a site on Victoria-Street.

> "No money" he states, "was paid beforehand for the purchase of ground on Victoria-Street. Only a suit in law was begun when the City of London refused to fulfill the contract made for that land and the trustees gave up the lawsuit on the advice of counsel that the outcome, in view of certain facts which became known after the bargain was concluded, that the outcome of the suit was doubtful."

Vincent's final intervention during his lifetime, in favour of the Italian Church was the decision taken by him to devote all the collections taken up during the Epiphany celebrations of 1850, to this church.

Vincent Pallotti's passage to eternity was duly chronicled in "The Tablet," for March 2nd, 1850, in an article whose text was taken and abridged from the *Moniteur Catholique*, under the title "Death of two holy priests in Rome" — one of them being Fr. Bernardo Clausi, the Holy Minim of St. Francis de Paola, who was a fast friend of Vincent's. After describing the death of Fr. Clausi, the article goes on to speak of Pallotti:

> The other holy man whose death we have to record is the Rev. Vincenzo Pallotti held in equal reverence though his gifts were of a completely different description. He was tranquil, profoundly recollected, of frail appearance, speaking little and low. Yet a word of his was as powerful as that of Fr. Bernardo. Placed at the head of various institutions which he wisely governed, Fr. Vincenzo was the father of the wretched and the orphan. He was rarely seen in public yet found wherever there was distress to relieve and though very poor himself, like St. Vincent de Paul he knew how to find succour for the afflicted. His mortification was heroic, for many years he used to pass whole nights in a church kneeling on the pavement in adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and the rising sun almost always found him in the posture in which he had commenced his meditation at nightfall. The public voice ascribes numerous extraordinary events and miraculous cures to the prayers of these two holy men and they are stated to have foretold, many years ago, that great calamities threatened the church and the city of Rome in particular. Yet they consoled those whom these sad predictions afflicted by speaking to them of the final triumph of the majestic spouse of Jesus Christ, thanks to the all-powerful intercession of Mary. They regarded the Mother of God

with that tender and filial devotion which is considered by Catholic Doctors as a mark of predestination. The death of these men filled the faithful of Rome with a sort of consternation."

The year 1850 was important, not only for our Society, but for Catholicism in Great Britain, though for different reasons. For it was the year of the 'Papal Aggression' and it registered the last great outbreak of popular Protestant feeling against the Catholic religion. Not since the Gordon Riots in the latter half of the 18th century had there been anything like it, and there has been nothing since. For many years, in fact ever since the Oxford Movement had got under way amongst educated Englishmen, the suspicion had been growing that the doctrines and practices of the Church of Rome had not been so definitively banished from the minds of Englishmen at large, that no fear need be entertained that they would once more secure a lodgement amongst the descendants of the Reformers. And now, quite suddenly, the general population learns that the Pope has set up a Hierarchy in England; bishops who will bear such distinctively English titles as Westminster and Birmingham, Liverpool and Southwark. The general public does not know, because it has not been told, that the measure has been under contemplation for several years now, that the British Government has been told all about it beforehand and has had nothing to say; that the territorial titles of the new bishops have a purely ecclesiastical significance; that, in fact, everything will be just as it was before ,except that the Vicar-Apostolic of the Midland District will in future be designated as the Bishop of Birmingham; that the new titles have been chosen with all care to avoid employing those used by the existing Anglican Bishops. The news is sprung on them suddenly, in the famous Pastoral of Cardinal Wiseman, dated October 7th, 1850, written in Rome, just after his elevation to the Cardinalate and his appointment as Archbishop of Westminster. As it is not the practice for any Bishop to address pastorals from within the precincts of the Holy City itself, Cardinal Wiseman published it just outside the walls of the city "from out the Flaminian Gate" and under that title it has gone down to history. Its florid language was not calculated to appease the suspicions of a nation which for centuries had been taught that Rome had designs on it.

"Your beloved country (they were told) has received a place amongst the fair churches which, normally constituted, form the

splendid aggregate of Catholic Communion; Catholic England has been restored to its orbit in the ecclesiastical firmament, from which its light had long vanished and begins now its course of regularly adjusted action round the centre of unity, the source of jurisdiction, of light and of vigour."

The inhabitants of various counties in the South of England, Protestants, must have read with not a little indignation, sentences like this:

"So that at present, and till such time as the Holy See shall think fit otherwise to provide, we govern and shall continue to govern, the counties of Middlesex, Hertford and Essex, as Ordinary thereof, and those of Surrey, Sussex, Kent and Berkshire and Hampshire, with the islands annexed, as Administrator with Ordinary jurisdiction."

The great newspapers, with The Times at their head, fanned the flames. The clergy of the Established Church, with of course, exceptions, contributed with sermons, denunciations, Episcopal charges, public indignation meetings. The Pope and Cardinal Wiseman were burned in effigy many times over. The politicians, whether led by their own fervour or unwilling to be outstripped, joined in the fray. A Lord Chancellor of England, at a Mansion House dinner, quoted amidst thuderous applause, the old line:

"Under our feet we'll stamp thy Cardinal's Hat.
In spite of Pope or dignities of Church."

Catholic priests were hooted and pelted in the streets; mobs gathered and broke the windows of Catholic churches, and for a while it looked as though lives and property might be in serious danger. The slumbering Protestant lion had awakened and no one knew what he would do next. The state of opinion amongst English Protestants during the " Papal Agression" agitation can be best conveyed by the famous 'Bell-passage' in Dr. Newman's Lecture to the Birmingham Oratory in 1851:

"On one dogma the Establishment is infallible, on one it may securely insist without fear of being unreasonable or excessive — that 'the Bishop of Rome hath no jurisdiction in this realm.' Here is sunshine amid the darkness, sense amidst confusion, an intelligible strain amid a Babel of sounds; whatever befalls, here is sure footing; it is 'No peace with Rome', 'Down with the Pope', and 'The Church in danger.' Never has the establishment failed in the use

of these important and effective watchwords; and many are its shortcomings but it is without reproach in the execution of this its special charge. Heresy, and skepticism, and infidelity, and fanaticism, may challenge it in vain; but fling upon the gale the faintest whisper of Catholicism, and it recognizes by instinct the presence of its connatural foe. Forthwith, as during the last year, the atmosphere is tremulous with agitation, and discharges its vibrations far and wide. A movement is in birth which has no natural crisis or resolution. Spontaneously the bells in the steeples begin to sound. Not by an act of volition but by a sort of mechanical impulse, bishop and dean, archdeacon and canon, rector and curate, one after another each in his high tower, off they set, swinging and booming, tolling and chiming, with nervous intenseness, and thickening emotion, and deepening volume, the old ding dong which has scared town and country this weary time; tolling and chiming away, jingling and clamouring and ringing the changes on their poor half-dozen notes, all about 'The Popish Agression', 'insolent and atrocious', 'insidious and insolent and atrocious', 'atrocious and insolent and ungrateful', 'insolent and atrocious', 'foul and offensive', 'pestilent and horrid', 'subtle and unholy', 'audacious and revolting', 'contemptible and shameless', 'malignant', 'frightful', 'mad', 'meretricious' - bobs, (I think the ringers call them) bobs and bobs-royal, and triple-bobs-majors and grandsires — to the extent of their compass and the full ring of their metal, in honour of Queen Bess and to the confusion of the Holy Father and the Princes of the Church."

Cardinal Wiseman returned to England while the agitation was at its height and immediately resolved on a bold course of action: to face the awakened lion and try, if not to convince, at least to placate him. Accordingly he prepared at top speed a pamphlet for publication, which bore the title "An Appeal to the English People" which had enormous circulation, and which was published, almost in extenso, in the principal newspapers of the day, including the Times. After explaining the real meaning which should be attached to the reconstitution of the Catholic Hierarchy in Great Britain, he went on to show that a measure which affected the Catholics and them alone, had been treated as an attempt at grasping the power and prerogatives of the Anglican Establishment.

His reasonable exposition mastered the clamour, which slowly died away, but the dormant prejudices which had been awakened, were not so easily lulled. For years afterwards any unusual progress of Catholicism, any intervention by prominent Catholics in public affairs bearing on Catholicism provoked further manifestations of bigotry and prejudice, even in the Courts of Law and in the Parliament. Here is where our

story of the Italian Church in London links up with the anti-Catholic agitations of the time.

In the autumn of 1850 Dr. Melia resolved to visit Italy, in order to secure subscriptions from the Italian Bishops and other benefactors, for the purchase of the site and the erection of the Italian church in London. On his return he published an appeal, which bore the title " Anglo-Italian Mission — An appeal to the piety and charity of the Italians. " This document speaks of the good prospects of London for conversions to the Catholic Faith and goes on to state that the scarcity of churches in that city, which has a Catholic population of two hundred thousand souls, is an obstacle even to the preservation of the faith of the Italians, who suffer from this scarcity and are at the mercy of the proselytizers endeavouring to take advantage of them. The prospect, the appeal goes on to say, of opening a spacious church in London is approved by ecclesiastical authority and by express will of the Holy Father will be dedicated to St. Peter.

> "This church will always be governed by a congregation of Italian secular priests founded in Rome, so that the Roman spirit may always influence it; in this church no payment will be exacted for admission, but will be freely open to all; in it confessors will be found for all the languages... and a school for children of both sexes will be annexed, and a habitation for the clergy... The site selected is freehold and becomes the permanent property of the church; it costs not less than £ 6,600." [38]

The article goes on to state that the Pope has, through Propaganda, recommended this enterprise to the Bishops of Italy, and that Cardinal Wiseman also commends it. The Cardinal-Vicar of Rome, in a second communication on the subject, dated March 20th 1851, repeats his exhortations to the Roman clergy to help in this good work. His Holiness the Pope, by a Rescript to Propaganda, dated March 9th 1851, grants an Indulgence of 100 days. Donations in favour of St. Peter's Italian Church in London may be sent to the Cardinal-Prefect of Propaganda; Prince and Princess Doria Pamphili; the Rector of the church of San Salvatore in Onda ' by the Sixtine Bridge in Rome; ' Cardinal Wiseman; and Fr. Raphael Melia, Miss. Ap., 54 Lincoln's Inn Fields.

In the same issue of this newspaper there is printed an appeal made by the Archbishop of Florence.

---

[38] Tablet 5.7.51.

"Ferdinand Minucci, by the Grace of God and of the Apostolic See, Archbishop of Florence, etc. orders a collection to be taken up in all the churches of his jurisdiction 'by the will of the Pope and of our own most religious Sovereign' on the Sunday preceding the feast of St. Peter and Paul, for the benefit of the Italian Church in London."

This appeal bears the date of June 9th 1851.

Poor Dr. Melia's laudable efforts to secure publicity for his enterprise were examined by some very unfriendly eyes. *The Morning Post,* still smarting under the stings of the great 'Papal Agression' of the year before was anxious to document the stand which it took on that occasion ,and therefore it published the text of the Papal approval of Dr. Melia's project and the Archbishop of Florence's pastoral, under this caption:

"The subjoined documents have recently been issued by the See of Rome. They will be received as the first step in the sequel to the late agressive act of the Bishop of Rome against the Queen and her regality." [39]

The question was first moved in the newspapers, but it soon found its way into the House of Lords! Just as the session of 1851 was about to end, the Earl of Harrowby rose to ask whether the Government was prepared to use its best offices "with the Court of Rome to obtain from it permission to erect a suitable Protestant church within the walls of the city of Rome for the worship of the Protestant church of England." There was, it appeared from the reply made in the name of the Government by Lord Lansdowne, a Protestant English church outside the walls just by the Flaminian Gate (the Flaminian Gate!), which was a converted granary, but was adequate for the number of persons who attended Divine Worship in it. But the reply was not judged satisfactory by Lord Harrowby whose real intention was to bring out "whether the Church of Rome will or will not permit British Protestants to have some building erected at their own cost, appropriated to their own worship within the walls of Rome, just as the Roman Catholics of every country have their own places of worship in nearly every town in this country. And he hoped that the Foreign Secretary would soon ask the Court of Rome for this permission" in order that the sincerity of its professions

---

[39] The Morning Post. 15.7.51.

regarding toleration might be put to the test without any disguise.

The Bishop of London, present at the debate, took it on himself to point the whole issue at Dr. Melia's projected Italian church, larding his remarks with heavy clerical irony and innuendo.

> "In this country (said the Bishop of London) Roman Catholics can already obtain with ease room and space to worship God in the form which is most agreeable to their own conscience; but they are not content with that: on the contrary, although they konw that they have far more than sufficient room in their places of worship, they have put forth, under the auspices of the Bishop of Rome himself, a proposal for a building of a magnificent Cathedral of St. Peter in this city, where the metropolitan cathedral is dedicated to St. Paul. They are anxious too to have it erected in great splendour. Surely then they cannot blame us if we are seeking to accomplish a similar object in Rome. As to the difficulties thrown in the way of Englishmen desirous of worshipping God at Rome in that splendour which suits at once their ritual and their habits, I have only to say that a large sum of money has been obtained during the past few weeks, not by indulgences (hear, hear) — for we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that the church of Rome has again had recourse to the practice which originally caused the Reformation. I mean the granting of indulgences to those who shall subscribe their money to the building of this new cathedral, or, in other words, the sale of indulgencies (hear, hear) — for the erection of a Protestant church or chapel in Rome without an appeal to any other argument than the attachment and love of British Protestants to the Church of England, its ordinances and its ritual. (hear, hear). Having seen the extraordinary document which has recently been promulgated by the Bishop of Rome, calling upon all the faithful to subscribe to the creation of a popish cathedral in London, to be governed by the Ordinary of London, his Eminence Cardinal Wiseman, I should have deemed myself guilty of an unpardonable dereliction of duty if I had remained entirely silent during this discussion."

A few days after this session of the House of Lords, The Times dealt editorially with the matter, and summarized it as follows:

> The first proceedings of the recent session were directed against the encroachments of the Bishop of Rome upon the national and ecclesiastical independence of this kingdom; the last words of the same Parliament were devoted to the practicability of Protestant worship within the walls of Rome... At this moment there stands a Cathedral of St. George in the borough of Southwark, another Cathedral of St. Patrick has been designed, we believe for West-

minster and a third 'Metropolitan church of St. Peter's' is now openly announced."[40]

We do not know if permission to open a Protestant place of worship within the walls of Rome was sought or not. Whether the unindulgenced money of which the Bishop of London boasted was ever applied for that or any other purpose, we do not know; if the Tablet is to be believed, the chief promoters of the Protestant-church-in-Rome scheme were an apostate Catholic and a Presbyterian Minister — the Rev. Dr. Cummings. Before a stone of the projected church could be laid, it would be necessary to determine which sect was to own it, and that would lead to trouble.

Fr. Melia was not unduly impressed by the civil and ecclesiastical great guns which had been turned on him and his enterprise. After his recovery from a serious illness in the early part of 1852, he travelled extensively in Italy, collecting for the site and church.

"Dr. Melia has travelled through Italy, not only in the Papal States, but also in the kingdom of Sardinia and Naples, the Grand Duchy of Tuscany and the Duchies of Modena, Parma and Piacenza, soliciting everywhere contributions for the undertaking. The result has been gratifying, considering the circumstances of Italy."[40]

The plot of land originally purchased on Farringdon-street could not be secured owing to an objection lodged by the City of London authorities. Finally, after protracted negotiations another desirable site was secured "at the top of Hatton-Garden, Holborn." The contract to purchase was signed in December 1852.

"Dr. Melia has been acknowledged by the purchasers as the Director of this undertaking and he will associate with himself some respectable and competent lay gentlemen for the transaction of the temporal business... Contribution... will be received by His Eminence Cardinal Wiseman and by the purchasers of the ground, the Rev. Dr. Melia, G. Faa di Bruno, Rev. Dr. Pius Melia and G. Bowyer, Esq. MP."[41]

At this stage in our story it is well to devote some attention to Fr. Pius Melia, whose name occurs for the first time in the preceding quotation. He was the elder brother of Father Raphael

---

[40] The Times 11.8.51.
[41] Tablet 25.12.52.

Melia, and was born in Rome in 1800, entered the Jesuit Order at the age of sixteen, was ordained in it and worked for years in Corsica. He withdrew from the Jesuits in 1848, became an external Associate of the Society of the Catholic Apostolate that same year and by his brother Raphael was recommended to Bishop Wiseman, who accepted him as a Missionary Apostolic. Fr. Pius Melia arrived in London in 1848 and engaged at first in missionary work amongst the Italians, assisting his brother. As soon as he had perfected his knowledge of the English language he devoted himself to general missionary work, at first in St. Leonard's-on-Sea (1850-1853) and then at Walthamstow (1855-1861.) He was Cardinal Wiseman's confessor and kept a permanent residence in Gray's Inn Square, in London, which was his home till his death. Always a close friend of the Pallottine Fathers in England, he was intimately associated with the building of the Italian Church from 1853 onwards and for many years he was one of the regular preachers at the weekly Italian service in the church. Many large benefactions to the church fabric were secured by his influence. Dr. Pius Melia was a man of literary tastes and wrote, in the English language, four important works on theological subjects. He died in London, on May 23rd, 1883. His interventions in Pallottine affairs will be noted in the order of occurrence.

Before continuing with the chronicle of Fr. Melia's efforts to build the Italian church, let us take note that the Introduction of Our Founder's Cause of Beatification was duly recorded in the columns of the Tablet of the time. This is the text of this notice, translated from the *Univers*:

> " The Sacred Congregation of Rites has just given notice that the ordinary process on the reputation for sanctity left by D. Vincenzo Pallotti shall be commenced without delay. The remissorial letters are being prepared and are even perhaps already delivered to the Postulator. D. Vincenzo Pallotti was a holy priest who died at Rome in 1850 whose memory is held in the utmost reverence and affection by the Roman population. No life was ever more devoted than his to the cause of charity. His days were entirely spent for the good of his neighbour of whatever condition and it was very usual to find at the door of his poor cell princes, prelates and great ladies, amid artisans, soldiers and poor women. All came to seek conusels and consolations. His nights he devoted to God and spent the greater part of them in the church, taking on a chair the little repose nature imperiously demanded. During his

---

[42] Ib. 31.7.52.

life people spoke of singular graces obtained by his intercession, supernatural favours due to his prayers. Since his death two miracles have been proved, or at least two cures presenting that character, one of which took place in London, the other in the Roman States. We believe we may announce that a learned religious at Rome is at this moment preparing the history of the life of Fr. Pallotti." [42]

During the course of the year 1853 a 24-page pamphlet appeared in London bearing the title: St. Peter's Church, Rectory and Schools for Italians and Catholics of all Nations, London 1853, with a circular seal in the centre of the title-page, with the legend: The Catholic Apostolate, London, surrounding the image of our Lord handing the Keys of the Kingdom to St. Peter. It does not state who was the writer, but from the internal evidence it may be gathered that Fr. Melia was. The pamphlet is devoted to explaining what had till then been done towards acquiring the site and preparing for the building of the church and rectory. But it also contains a statement about the community of priests who have been entrusted with the task of raising this church. This statement, coming as almost certainly it does, from our Founder's earliest companion is important not only for its intrinsic interest, but also because it is the earliest printed explanation of our Society made in the English language by one of its members.

"The church (the writer says) is to be confided to the Institute founded by the Servant of God Vincent Pallotti, which has for its general end to help the Holy Father and the Bishops in the works of the Catholic Apostolate, that is, to revive faith and kindle charity amongst Catholics and to propagate it amongst heretics and infidels. All the means, both spiritual and temporal, which may come within the reach of the members of the institute are directed to this great and holy end. The institute, which is under subjection to the ordinary, is divided into three classes. The first is formed by the Congregation of secular priests and brothers coadjutors of the Catholic Apostleship who live together in houses of the congregation, in a common perfect life, under rules left by the Founder. The second class is composed of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Catholic Apostleship, who live likewise in community, observing a perfect life in common, under the direction of the priests of the Congregation. The third class is the Pious Society of the Catholic Apostleship, composed of all the faithful of every sex, state and station in life — who in any way, either by their personal gratuitous works or spontaneous offerings, or such other means which are in their power, or at least and principally with their prayers, co-operate in furthering

the object of the institution. This society is also under the direction of the priests of the institution."

The pamphlet then goes on to state that

"a quantity of beautiful marble has already been brought from Italy and lies on the site of the new church. There are four columns of Portovenere, four columns of Siena, two of jasper, twenty-six slabs of serpentine, several pieces of jasper, porphry, alabaster, vert antique, etc. and two altars of white marble."

These materials were purchased by Fr. Melia in Rome, in the year 1851, from a dealer in that city. They lay on the Isola Del Giglio at Leghorn for some time, awaiting shipment to London. Almost five hundred pounds were expended on them.

The pamphlet further states how the church is to be staffed. Since it will be at the service of Catholics of all nations, confessors will be provided for the principal languages. Amongst them, of course, there are to be Englishmen.

"Several English students, novices of the congregation, who will eventually be attached to the new St. Peter's church in London, have been sent to Rome to receive a proper Roman education."

As an illustration of this early recruitment of vocations for our Society in England, there is an interesting manuscript in the General Archives of our headquarters in Rome, which was drawn up in English by Dr. Melia in the month of November of the year 1852, and as far as we know, never printed. The manuscript, which consists of 18 pages and is divided into seven short sections, bears the title: "A Short Account of the Institute of the Catholic Apostleship." There is a brief introduction, followed by the sections, which cover the following ground: I, the threefold division of the Society; the Congregation of secular priests and brothers coadjutors of the Catholic Apostleship; II, the Congregation of the Sisters of the Catholic Apostleship; III, the Pious Society of the Catholic Apostleship; IV, the various approvals and privileges of the Catholic Apostleship; its foundation in London; V, conditions for admission of postulants to the Congregation of the Catholic Apostleship; VI, conditions for admission to the Sisterhood of the Catholic Apostleship; VII, conditions for admission to the Pious Society of the Catholic Apostleship. There is one remarkable paragraph in the manuscript, which occurs in the explanation of the third section.

"The third class of the institute (the author writes) is the Pious Society of the Catholic Apostleship, which has the same end as the others, viz. to conserve, defend and propagate the Catholic Faith and Piety everywhere. This class although the third on account of its rank, was the first conceived by the Founder, the first in existence, the first to be blessed by the ecclesiastical Superiors and the first enriched by the spiritual treasures of the Church. It is composed of all the faithful of every sex, state, condition of life, who in any way by their gratuitous works, or spontaneous oblations, co-operate in furthering the objects of the Society."

Shortly after this statement was written we find Dr. Melia for the first time using a printed letterhead on his correspondence. We reproduce the text of this letterhead, in the intelligence that it has a bearing on the assertions made in the preceding paragraph:

"Congregation and Society of the Catholic Apostleship / New St. Peters / For the Italians and other Foreigners / At the North End of Hatton Garden, London."

The first man from the British Isles to actually join our Society was a priest, the Rev. Robert Hodgson. Fr. Faa di Bruno, writing to Pallotti from Kentish-Town on March 7th, 1849 states that this priest 'who is esteemed by Mgr. Wiseman' wishes to join the Society and that at the time of writing Fr. Faa is assisting this priest in a new mission established near Spanish-Place. [43]

At some time during his stay at the Irish College Rome, which extended from the 26th of February till the 16th of July, 1849, our Founder wrote to this priest the Latin Letter whose text was published many years ago by Fr. Hettenkofer. [44] Fr. Hodgson was actually admitted into the Society, as we learn from a letter of Melia to Pallotti, dated april 4th, 1849:

"The priest Hodgson was admitted to the Society last week. Send us a Master of Novices. I say 'send' but I should say 'come', for such is the wish of Wiseman, several times repeated to me. The season is now propitious, the sea is tranquil and the means of travel easy..." [45]

---

[43] Lettere a Pallotti: Faa.
[44] Epistolae Latinae, Rome 1907.
[45] Lettere a Pallotti: Melia.
[46] Archiv. Gen. Busta Status Personalis

We have not been able to secure more information about this Fr. Hodgson, nor how long did his connection with our Society last. It certainly continued for some time for in the list of personnel of our Society in London in the year 1861, his name appears.[46]

The recruitment of vocations in England was much in the thoughts of Frs. Melia and Faa di Bruno, but, apart from Fr. Hodgson, such candidates as presented themselves were sent to Rome for their traning. It emerges from a letter addressed by Melia to Vaccari, who succeeded our Founder as Superior, that at the date of this letter (September 15th, 1852) there were already two English students in Rome, for Melia asks Vaccari to convey his greetings, to the two young Englishmen — "i due inglesini." And the following May, writing to Dr. Faa, who had gone on a visit to Rome, Fr. Melia tells him that a third student, Mr. Thomas Thacker, an Irishman and a convert of one year's standing, is about to set out for Rome to join the Society. Fr. Faa had been urging the advantages of opening a studentate in England itself, and in this same letter Fr. Melia expresses his acquiescence and goes on to state that he knows of two suitable houses, one of them 25 miles from London, the other 45 miles away. He then discusses the pensions which could be charged the students as a means of support for such an establishment. We way pause here and reflect that the history of our Society in Great Britain and the English-speaking lands would have been vastly different if this project had been put into execution. At a later date something was done along these lines at Ipswich and the results were good as far as they went, which could never have been very far, for the Ipswich house was a parish-college combination. Far better it would have been if Faa's original proposal to establish a house exclusively ad-hoc, for candidates for our Society, had been carried out.

These students were lodged at the San Salvatore house in Rome, in much discomfort, one imagines, owing to the lack of accommodation; till in 1855 the Society was granted ample living quarters in the famous Cento Preti hostel across the road from San Salvatore. Fr. Hettenkofer has published a list of the students who took up residence there at that date

---

[47] Historia PSM p. 139.

and the following are germane to our story: John Monks (English) Maurice Philip Clifford (Irish), Thomas Thacker (Irish), Thomas Francis Gorman (English) and Aemilian Kirner (German). Of these, Monks left the Society before receiving Orders; Maurice Philip Clifford left in Deacon's Orders and joined the Westminster diocese, served for many years at Golden Square and died in 1881; Thomas Thacker was ordained in 1859, obtained his doctorate in theology. went to the Italian church, London in 1861, retired from the Society about 1865, joined the Westminster diocese, served the mission in Bow for nearly twenty-five years and died in London in 1899; Thomas Francis Gorman who left the Society before ordination, joined the Westminster diocese, for whose service he was ordained in 1863, worked for many years in the Commercial Road district, became Rector of Isleworth and died in 1907, in his 68th year. In the list of personnel for the year 1861, which we mentioned above, a priest named Peter Mc Auley is listed as an assistant priest attached to the church of San Salvatore in Rome.

CHAPTER III

Aemilian Kirner was the son of the village schoolmaster of Urach in The Black Forest, Germany, where he was born in 1836. This part of Germany was famous for cuckoo-clock making, which was a cottage industry, and there was a relative of the Kirner familiy in London who was marketing these clocks, dearly beloved of the Victorians. Aemilian was sent to London to assist this relative. Here he met Dr. Faa di Bruno, who promptly discerned in him the germs of a vocation and sent him to Rome, early in 1855. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1861, some months later took his doctorate in theology, and was appointed to London at the beginning of 1862. In 1865 he was appointed bursar of the Italian church, which was heavily in debt and two years later he went to the United States and Canada to collect funds — the first Pallottine to cross the Atlantic. His stay in the New World lasted till the end of 1869. He was later appointed Rector of the newly-founded house of Ipswich. When the College of St. Patrick was founded in Masio, Northern Italy, he was made the first Superior. Recalled to London to become Rector of St. Peter's, he later left England in 1884 in order to found the Mount Carmel Church in New York. Here he constructed the church and was engaged in building the parish school when, one day as he was assisting the workmen, a wall fell in and two of the workmen were killed and Dr. Kirner mortally wounded. Two days later he died, "a martyr to his people," a contemporary newspaper declared. Dr. Kirner was the first German national to join our Society.

Though Fr. Kirner was the first Pallottine to cross the Atlantic, many disciples of Pallotti had gone that way before him. Perhaps the earliest of them was Fr. Theodore Noethen, a German priest who spent a year (1840-41) in Vincent's missionary College in Rome, preparing for missionary work in the U.S.A. In the course of his ministry Fr. Noethen produced several important works which went through many editions, on biblical,

catechetical and spiritual subjects, as well as a compendium of church history. He died in 1879, having been for years the pastor of the church of the Holy Cross, Albany, NY.

After the first, largely unsuccessful effort to recruit vocations in Great Britain, we do not find any more attempts being made for a long time. Maybe the reason lay in the internal difficulties which at this time our Society was facing. Our Founder died while the Society was still in its formative stage, from the juridical point of view. There was a rich legacy of spirituality but the juridical implications had not been completely worked out and different opinions were held as to the true number, *ad mentem Fundatoris,* of the Promises. It was judged best not to admit new members until these doubts were settled. Thus we read that in 1864 the Rector-General, Fr. Auconi, replied to an applicant that for the present his application would not be entertained. But better days were to come.

Let us return now to Frs. Melia and Faa, striving to erect the Italian church in London, or rather, the "Church of All Nations" as it was frequently styled as this time. The land had come into the possession of the Society at the end of 1852, but not only were the existing funds exhausted by the purchase, but a question arose regarding the freehold of the acquired site. There were some houses — five in number — situated on Little Saffron Hill whose tenants claimed a right-of-way across the land on which it was proposed to build the church. The best solution, though a costly one, was to purchase these houses outright, which, after some hesitation was done. The sum of £650 was expended on them. These houses were not pulled down until the construction of the church commenced in 1862, so for some years they were rented and the tidy little sum of six hundred pounds was made out of them. But a vexatious delay was imposed on the building project.

Fr. Melia was impeded by circumstances from dedicating himself completely to the task of erecting the church which he had been planning. In the year 1855 Vincent Pallotti's immediate successor, Fr. Francis Mary Vaccari, fell ill with an incurable ailment and Fr. Melia was forced to go to Rome, in order to act as his assistant, and after his death on January 20th 1956, Melia was elected Rector-General. This, of course, entailed residence in Rome ,except for visits to London.

The financial management of the church funds of the London project was placed, as from March lst, 1853, in the hands of Fr. Pius Melia, whose career we have noticed above. Ten years later, after the inauguration of the church, this priest published a pamphlet: Report/ of/The receipts and disbursements/ in relation with the new/St. Peter's Italian Catholic Church/Back Hill, Little Saffron Street, Hatton Wall/Hatton Garden E.C./London March 1863/8 pp., which contains, as the title states, a full account of monies received and expended.

Meanwhile, what was Dr. Faa di Bruno doing? The prospects of coming to an arrangement with Fr. Hardinge Ivers in Kentish-Town had vanished into thin air. The original chapel of St. Alexis had been opened by Fr. Hardinge Ivers on a plot of land included in his own house. It must have been a very precarious edifice, for a very short time after it was opened, this priest decided to build another and larger St. Alexis church on a better site. A new plot of land was somehow secured and the foundation stone of a new church of St. Alexis, also in Kentish-Town, was laid at the end of October of the year 1850. The ceremony was performed in the presence of Prince John of Spain and the Archduchess Maria Beatrice of Austria. It was announced at the same time that Fr. Hardinge Ivers was in Belgium, collecting funds for the enterprise. We cannot discover if work on the church was ever commenced. What does appear is that Fr. Hardinge Ivers began to develop views about the various tendencies amongst Catholics in Great Britain, which were to get him into serious trouble. The historians of the period explain that there was a certain amount of resistance to the newly established Hierarchy amongst some of the clergy and laity. Writing to Fr. Vaccari at the end of 1851, just after the passage through Parliament of the Ecclesiastical Titles Act, Fr. Melia, in answer to a question, paints an interesting picture of Catholic ecclesiastical affairs in Great Britain as they appeared to this foreign observer whose experience qualified him to emit a fair and unbiassed opinion.

" I come at last (he writes) to the news from an impartial point of view, which you asked me to forward regarding ecclesiastical affairs here. *Sunt mala mixta bonis.* I shall begin with the bad things, or at least those which *look* bad. The Bill against the Ecclesiastical Titles, which it was believed coud not pass, has passed. This has brought about the discouragement and the ill-humour of some of the old Catholics and recent converts, who, finding them-

selves in honourable careers, see their advancement blocked by the prevalent anti-Catholic feeling. All Catholics in general are considered public sinners and blameable contemners of the law which forbids the ecclesiastical titles and are therefore generally despised. It is true that Catholics cannot and must not receive this law; it is true that they are right in holding meetings to protest against it within the terms of the laws, but it is also true that they are going against public opinion and that is enough for them to become the object of condemnation. In England, outside the courts, judgement is not given according to reason but according to feeling, that is, sentiments and opinions which are born under the influence of some great personage, and woe betide whoever wishes to act against this common opinion! Everyone will hate him. Now, since Catholics must necessarily act against such popular feelings, which hold that the Bill is just, they are therefore execrated. The Times, which is par ecellence the Protestant paper stokes the fires every day against the Catholics, attacking them whenever it can do so with a show of reason. The Duke of Norfolk, who never had any religion, has now declared himself a Protestant, but as he was always presumed to be a Catholic, his supposed apostasy has pleased the Protestants. Protestant ministers harangue from the pulpits against Catholics and it was ordered that Catholic servants and maids should be dismissed and that no one should visit houses, even Protestant ones, where Catholics are employed. As a consequence hundreds of servants were dismissed on the following two days. The Redemptorists, who used to ring their bell very early, and were drawing very favourable comments, were ordered not to ring their bell any more. These and other facts are having an influence on conversions. But there are good things too. The persecution of the Catholics has induced some to embrace the Faith precisely because it is being persecuted. The lower classes respect the Catholics and many of them would become Catholics if there was anyone to instruct them. Since my return I have had the consolation of receiving many into the Church and I have had others under instruction. Priests who, without seeking the favours of the rich and avoiding the loss of time in dinners and conversations, would give themselves *toto homine* to the instruction of the poor, who know nothing about religion, would accomplish a great mission. It has been asserted that of the lower orders in London, perhaps two or three per cent have ever entered, once, a church. They think that religion is a matter only for the better-off and not the poor because they observe that only the better-dressed go to church and that the Protestant clergy only look after the rich. When they see that the Catholic priests seek out the poor, they judge that the Catholic religion is the religion of the poor, so that if they have to select a religion, this will be it. The union of Irish and English Catholics in combating the unjust law is also a great advantage. Another advantage too is that a schism, which a certain number of English priests of the old school were threatening, in the guise of dictating to Cardinal Wiseman and to Rome, demanding that parishes and parish priests should be canonically created and that the clergy should have the right to nominate bishops, has been

dispelled. It is often said that only the worst wheel of the carriage creaks. They are ignorant, cold in their ministry, they love to dine well, sleep comfortably and have fine houses. They have been two centuries behind the times, are enemies of the new institutions and are against foreign clergy who shame them by their zeal. Now that the persecution is dying down they are showing their hand again and they use the *Catholic Standard* as their organ, in which they print offensive statements against the Cardinal and the Holy See. The writers of this paper, who are laymen, deserve a signal reproof. From the state things are now, I can predict that the persecution will die away. The Government is sorry and afraid. The Irish party frightens them. Perhaps the best thing is to limit ones self to prayer for England, for positive action might be dangerous."

Poor Hardinge Ivers allowed himself to be drawn into these controversial attitudes taken up by what Melia describes as the old Catholic clergy. The French Catholic newspaper, *l'Ami de la Religion* opened its columns to some of the mal-contents. Fr. Hardinge Ivers, writing under the pseudonym of Abbe Cognat, was unfortunately amongst them and he allowed his pen far too much latitude in dealing with his ecclesiastical Superior, Cardinal Wiseman. The latter, it seems, attributed the barbed articles to a troublesome priest who had been on temporary duty in the archdiocese of Westminster and had to be removed — a certain Fr. Coyle. Fr. Coyle objected and took the Cardinal before the Courts and won damages for five thousand pounds, a sentence which on appeal was sustained. In both Court cases, one of which took place in August 1854, the other in April 1855, Fr. Hardinge Ivers appeared as a witness for the plaintiff. His intervention consisted mainly in his avowal of authorship of the writings of Abbe Cognat. In the course of his evidence at the second trial, he explained his position by stating that in the Catholic Church at the moment there were two parties, an ultramontane and a moderate party, to the latter of which he subscribed. He possessed, he stated, faculties for life by a Papal concession, for he was a Roman priest, though an Englishman by birth, and said that, after the Cardinal had asked him to apply for ordinary faculties, he had ceased to officiate in Kentish-Town, and put in an appeal to the Holy See.

Fr. Hardinge Ivers' avowal of authorship of the Cognat letters showed him at such variance with his ecclesiastical superiors that he could hardly expect rehabilitation without some public disavowal. This he apparently never made though

he never left the Church and there may have been some reconciliation in the end. His last years were spent in Bloomsbury ("a literary gentleman"), and a few days before his death, which took place on October 18th 1867, he went, very ill,to stay with his sister in Kentish-Town, where he died without medical attendance. There was an inquest, at which his sister stated that he had given his property to the Roman Catholic Church. One of the witnesses stated that Ivers was a priest in the parish church of the place where he (witness) resided and he had seen Fr. Ivers there on the Monday and Tuesday preceding his death. The deduction can be made that Fr. Ivers somehow had got back into good standing before his death, as we fervently hope was really the case, since he was known and esteemed by our Blessed Founder, whose prayers from Heaven must have been with this poor wayward man.

In the meantime, what of Dr. Faa di Bruno? We have seen above that he was engaged in an active apostolate in the Clerkenwell district, besides his commitments in Barnet. We learn further, from an Obituary notice published in England after his death, that about this time he turned his attention to the Highgate district of London, where there was no Catholic mission. "He rented" says this account "a small house in Highgate and established the first Catholic school in that district. On Saturday afternoons he used to gather the people in the garden of the house and preach to them." Not without opposition, for on one occasion, the account goes on to tell, he was stoned by a hostile mob; on another, he was barricaded inside his room; and on yet another, his house was invaded and his goods, including his Mass vestments, thrown out of the window' He may justly be regarded as the founder of Catholicism in Highgate.

Fr. Melia was recalled to Rome; Dr. Faa di Bruno was his natural successor in London, faced with the problem of a large site acquired in the Clerkenwell district for the purpose of erecting thereon the future "Church of all Nations" with a special emphasis on the Italian population of London. Dr. Faa never was enamoured of the Sardinian Chapel even as a provisional solution, whether of the problems of the Italian colony or of the Society of the Catholic Apostolate. Hence we find him, in the absence of Fr. Melia, coming to a tentative arrangement with his friend Fr. Kyne, whose career we have

noticed earlier, regarding the church of St. Peter and Paul, known as the Rosoman Street Chapel. We quote the text of the document agreed between them in view of its interest to later-day Pallottines, for almost one hundred years after it was drawn up, the Pallottines *did* come into possession of the Rosoman Chapel! The document is in the archives of the Westminster Curia. There is a copy in our General Archive in Rome. It reads as follows:

"Memorandum of an understanding between the Rev. Dr. Faa di Bruno on the one hand and the Reverend John Kyne on the other, relative to Rosoman Street Chapel, on Friday 27th February 1854. The Reverend Dr. Faa di Bruno proposes to take Rosoman Street Chapel for three years and to pay £ 200 in advance for the use of the Chapel during that period, provided however the Rev. Dr. Melia has not already made or begun to make arrangements with the Cardinal concerning this or any other Chapel, and provided also that at the end of three years an option be given to Dr. Faa di Bruno to pay a yearly rent of £ 66.13.4 together with the usual taxes, which are also to be paid during the first three years. The above understanding is come to, subject of course to the sanction of the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster."

In an undated covering letter Fr. Kyne explains to the Cardinal that "it is desirable for the Italian population of London to have some place for themselves until the new Church of All Nations is built" adding with some scepticism "if it ever is to be built." And Fr. Kyne given another reason as well. "Dr. Faa has money which with the best of intentions he sometimes fritters away not very wisely."

The arrangement came to nothing, for reasons which are unknown to us. We have implied above that Fr. Faa di Bruno never considered himself circumscribed to missionary effort exclusively amongst his compatriots in England. This must not be taken to mean, however, that he took no interest in their vicissitudes. Two incidents, which provoked comment in the Press at the time, show that he was as concerned as any priest in their spiritual welfare, particularly when they were in trouble with the law of the land. One of these relates to a prisoner under sentence of death in Newgate prison. At this time there was much difficulty for priests in obtaining access to Catholic prisoners and this poor man, who knew little or no English, sought in vain for a priest of his own language. His plight became known to Dr. Faa by means of a letter in

Italian smuggled out of the prison, but entry was refused him. Dr. Faa published the letter, and the facts of this unpardonable imhumanity, in The Tablet of May 12th, 1855. Eighteen months later, three Italians were sentenced to death in Winchester. These despairing men, hoping for a reprieve, manifested their desire to become Protestants and the prison chaplain of that faith instructed them by means of an interpreter and accepted their recantation. But the reprieve did not come and two of them reverted to the faith of their fathers when all earthly hope was gone. The third continued to hope almost until the foot of the gallows, but he too, at the very last moment protested that he wanted to die as a Catholic. Dr. Faa di Bruno and another Italian priest attended these unfortunate men. The prison chaplain came under criticism for his part in the affair. The facts were given to the public in a letter from Sir George Bowyer published in The Tablet for December 27th, 1856.

It took a long time to iron out the difficulties in the way of the construction of the Church for Italians and other foreigners in London. An optimistic note is struck by an announcement in The Tablet for July 25th 1857:

> "We learn with much pleasure that it is intended to commence the erection of the large central church for Italians and other foreigners... Most of the difficulties have been overcome... Mr. Gilbert Blount has been requested to send in a design for the sacred edifice, which is to be in the Italian style."

A building of this size was going to require more money than could be raised on the spot. Dr. Faa accordingly determined to seek the funds amongst the Catholics of Europe. He commenced his task in his native Piedmont in the month of October of the year 1858 and he spent six months making appeals, wherever he could secure an audience, in most of the dioceses of Northern Italy. After a short visit to Marseilles and Nice, he passed to Vienna and then to Poland, where he spent almost a year. In June 1860 we find him in what is now Czechoslovakia and at the end of that year, in Bohemia and Moravia. At the beginning of 1861 he visited Silesia, where he stayed several months. Austria and the Tyrol were then visited and at the end of 1861 he is back in Rome. The record of his travels is preserved in his Diary, which is kept in the General Archives of Our Society in Rome and one day, no doubt, will find an Editor, for it is full of interesting details as to

conditions of travel in those days, and the state of Catholicism in some of the remote places he visited.

Fr. Faa's withdrawal from England meant that at this time there was no Pallottine priest in residence in that country. Our interests were represented by Dr. Pius Melia and we read of Fr. Raphael Melia paying occasional visits. It does not however follow that the Italians of London, with whose fortunes our Community was linked, were being neglected, for by this time, (1858), according to a correspondent in The Tablet [1] there were no fewer than twenty-two Italian priests from Piedmont, whose names he gives, in England! One imagines that there were Italian priests from other parts of the Peninsula as well; the conclusion is that the Italian population was not spiritually destitute at this time.

With so many Italian clergy about, the efforts of proselytisers were somewhat circumscribed. There is evidence that they had not abandoned the field, for we find an Italian priest, Fr. Sebastian Faenza, long resident in London establishing an Italian Poor School in the Hatton Garden district at this date because there were no less than three Protestant Italian schools functioning in the area, besides a Mazzini (that is a non-sectarian) School! It was this same priest who, in the absence of Frs. Melia and Faa, was appointed Italian Chaplain at the Sardinian Chapel by Cardinal Wiseman at the end of the year 1861.

> "His Eminence the Cardinal Archbishop has decided that the Rev. Sebastian Faenza, assisted by the Rev. Pius Melia, is to be intrusted with the spiritual care of the Catholics residing in London and on that account Fr. Faenza is to have the title of Hon. Chaplain at St. Anselm's Lincoln's Inn Fields." [2]

Fr. Faenza did not hold the position for long. On the following year he disappears from the English Clergy List. There is reason for thinking that this Fr. Faenza was linked in some way with our Society, perhaps as an external Associate for in *the 1861* List of Personnel of the Society he appears as a member.

How much money did Fr. Faa collect during his tour? The pamphlet published by Fr. Pius Melia after the dedication of the church mentions receipts as well as disbursements, but

---

1 Tablet. 23.1.58.
2 The Lamp. January 1862.

it is not possible to determine exactly what amount of the sums accredited came through the agency of Fr. Faa; a rough estimate would indicate about three thousand pounds.

The erection of the church was commenced before Fr. Faa's return to England, an event which took place in September 1862. He found on his arrival that finally the Pallottine ideal of community life had been established, for two of the young priests lately ordained in Rome — Frs. Kirner and Tracker — had been sent to London by Fr. Melia in 1861, who, after resigning his office of Rector-General, joined them early in 1862. The community dwelling was situated at 11, Little Saffron Hill, in what we conjecture was one of the little houses which had to be purchased in order to liquidate the disputed right-of-way. An account of the progress of the church under construction can be gathered from a letter to The Tablet [3] from an anonymous correspondent, who writes as follows:

> "Allow me to call your attention and that of your readers to a building which appears to have been overlooked by the Catholic Press though it is well worthy of their notice. I allude to the 'Church of All Nations', as it was originally to have been called, though I believe that title has now been abandoned and it is now to be called St. Peter's. It is situated at Hatton Wall, at the top of Hatton Garden. It will be when complete a very fine building in the style of the Roman basilicas, with galleries to increase the accomodation. It is calculated to hold between three and four thousand people. Rapid progress is now being made and part of the church is being roofed in. It is intended principally for the Italians in London, of whom many thousands are now without a church. It will be served by a religious community founded by the saintly Vincent Pallotti...."

Some days after this notice appeared, His Eminence Cardinal Wiseman paid a visit to the church under construction. The same newspaper thus describes the occasion:

> "On Saturday July 26th Cardinal Wiseman visited St. Peter's new Italian Church and expressed himself highly pleased with the progress which had been made. The plans were shown and explained to His Eminence by the architect, Mr. Bryson. The building will have three entrances, in Hatton Wall, Saffron Hill and Back Hill, close to the new station of the Underground Railway in Victoria street, Holborn Hall. It will be entirely covered in about a month..." [4]

---

[3] The Tablet 26.7.62.
[4] Ib. 2.8.62.

The available funds were not nearly sufficient to finish the construction, so it was necessary to keep on appealing for help, Fr. Faa now resolved to call upon people in England to come forward and assist the good cause, and for this purpose he made a series of appeals in The Tablet. The first of these was printed before his return from Italy. It is dated from San Salvatore, on the eve of the feast of the Asumption, 1862.

"Where is Dr. Faa? (he writes) It is a long time since we heard of him, is he living or dead?" I answer: I live and I shall tell you why I have remained absent from England and silent for four years. Certain prophets who seemed neither friends to us nor satisfied with our project of building an Italian church in London, even prophesied evil about the success of our undertaking. They began by saying we would never be able to get a piece of ground in the heart of London for our church. Then, when the ground was secured and an opposition rose from the Protestant neighbours claiming a passage through the ground, they said we would never be able to get out of this trouble and when the difficulty was overcome and we succeeded in buying five houses more so as to complete a piece of ground 200 feet long by 80 feet wide for the church they foretold that the undertaking was impossible, that the plan was too grand, that there was no hope of success and that it would be money thrown away to support such an undertaking; and not only did they spread about these rumours but actually threw many other impediments in the way so that their prophecy should by all means be true... I started from England and combating against many difficulties of language, of hot, snowy, rainy and frosty weather, of sickness, of disappointments and opposition, of privations and inconveniences of all kinds, and even of persecution and incarceration, sometimes in want of lodging and proper food, I travelled for three years in Italy, Austria, Poland, Prussia, France and Spain and succeeded in spite of the bad times in collecting a little sum to begin with. Three months ago with the sanction of Cardinal Wiseman the foundations of the church were laid and the work since then has rapidly progressed."[5]

Dr. Faa then goes on to say that the unfriendly critics and the prophets of evil have now disappeared and all are praising the undertaking and wishing it success, and concludes by appealing for funds to finish the building properly. A few weeks later, writing from London, Dr. Faa again addresses the readers of The Tablet and given details of the work in progress.

"I have not met anyone who has not spoken highly of the building — a fact which does great honour to the young Irish

---

[5] Ib. 23.8.62.

architect, Mr. Bryson and to my friend Dr. Pius Melia who has chosen and directed him... The walls are already raised to their due height, the brickwork and masonry are concluded, the beams and rafters for the roof are in readiness and in three weeks the roof itself will be finished. But alas! it can only be by borrowed money, unless by this appeal £200 can be raised... Hitherto I have troubled no one in England for subscriptions, not for the site though it cost £7,000, nor for the foundations, eighteen feet deep, nor for the walls, thirty feet high, nor for the fourteen stone columns, twenty feet in height. It is only now that I begin to beg for the roof, thirteen thousand square feet, which being completed we shall then have the first solemn function by Cardinal Wiseman, who has kindly consented to lay the first stone of the high altar." [6]

Returning to the charge in the same newspaper Dr. Faa deals with the objections of those who feel that the church is too large, and also of those who lament that it is not Gothic in style.

"To the first of these objection (he writes) I reply that the time is almost past of building small chapels. There are now more than thirty-five places of Catholic worship in London, whose only fault is that they are too small and that some are merely temporary. Priests are continually lamenting their want of space and are necessitated to make all sorts of contrivances to accomodate their overflowing congregations; while on the contrary wherever spacious churches have been raised, their size has never been an object of regret, as witness the churches of St. George, Southwark, the Oratory, St. John's, Islington and St. Michael's. Commercial road. Now we have been fortunate enough to find a good sized freehold property in so central a position as Hatton Wall, which we were able to purchase for £7,000 collected in Italy principally through the exertions of the Rev. Raphael Melia; we have carried the building up to the roof, also with money from abroad, without laying the least burden on the Catholics of England. Who can blame us if we venture to erect so large a church in so crowded a neighbourhood?... To the second objection I will only answer that the Temple of Solomon was was not Gotic; if the Tabernacle made after the design given by God to Moses had no trace of the Gothic style, and however warm an admirer one may be of this order, it is no reason for his discountenancing all others, as if a church would not be the House of God if it were not Gothic. If the patrons of Italian architecture do not refuse their praise and aid to Gothic buildings, why should the admirers of the latter be less generous with regard to the Italian?" [7]

---

[6] Ib. 11.10.62.
[7] Ib. 18.10.62.

A few weeks afterwards Dr. Faa addressed yet another letter to the public, in which he reiterated his petition for aid to the new church. In this communication he states that the building is now roofed so that there is no longer any danger from the weather. Much interior work, he observers, remains to be done, the doors and windows fitted and the altar site prepared.[8]

The crypt underlying the church was blessed on Christmas Day, 1862 and, we presume, from that time forward, services were carried out on the site.

On March 17th, 1863, His Eminence Cardinal Wiseman again visited the church under construction and performed the ceremony of consecration of the Great Bell.

> "It is a Monster Bell and we believe considerably larger than any Catholic church in England can boast... It stands six feet high, while in circumference it is twenty - one feet and its weight is three and one-half tons."[9]

The bell was cast by Vickers of Sheffield and was shown at the International Exhibition of 1862. Engraved on it is the legend; "Laudo Deum Verum, plebem voco, congrego clerum, defunctos ploro, hostem fugo, festa decoro." For some years, until the tower was completed, it hung on trestles in George Yard, adjoining the church.

> "We have full warrant for asserting (the Tablet goes on to say) that Pius IX takes a deep personal interest in this church and was pleased to present, wholly unsolicited, many of the works of art which attracted so much attention at the Roman Court of the great Exhibition. The Tiara and the Keys are most prominently placed in view as also a well-executed bust of St. Peter... Many Catholics will be interested to hear that the Founder of this new Congregation — the Ven. Father Vincent Pallotti, whose name is held in universal benediction in Rome, was for a time the Confessor of the reigning Pontiff and we believe honoured with the friendship and the confidence of the Holy Father, projected the new church for the benefit of his countrymen in London, and contributed liberally towards its execution."

The blessing of St. Peter's Church, Hatton Garden, was a very brilliant ceremony for its time, since no less than twelve Bishops assembled for the occasion, including the Cardinal-Archbishop of Westminster; the others were Grant of South-

---

[8] Ib. 15.11.62.
[9] Ib. 28.3.63.

wark, Gillis of Eastern Scotland, Ullathorne of Birmingham, Roskell of Nottingham, Amherst of Northampton, Turner of Salford, Morris of Troy, Browne of Newport, Cornthwaite of Beverley, Browne of Shrewsbury, Geoghan of Australia. Over fifty priests were present too, including representatives of the Benedictines, Dominicans, Capuchins, Augustinians, Marists, Oblates of St. Charles, Redemptorists, Servites. Ten canons of the metropolitan Chapter were also present in their robes.

The solemn inauguration of the church was followed by a disagreeable incident. Fr. Pius Melia, as we have already mentioned, was in charge of the financial arrangements concerning the church; it was he who named the architect and signed the contract with the constructor. This contract provided that the edifice should be erected for a sum of £3,700, but, as often happens, in the course of the building, modifications were made and extra costs incurred. When the church was completed and inaugurated, Fr. Pius Melia proposed taking a holiday in Italy, but to his annoyance he was arrested and held to bail by the constructor on the eve of his departure, on the plea that there was money owing and that the clergyman might reasonably be thought to be intending to subtract himself from his obligations by fleeing abroad. Fr. Pius Melia immediately obtained a judicial order setting him at liberty and commenced a civil action for wrongful and malicious arrest. The action was heard in Croydon, and on the 19th of August 1863, before Mr. Baron Bramwell, the defendants being a solicitor named Neale and the contractor, who was a person named Fish. In the course of the action the architect Mr. Bryson, testified that the total expense incurred in the construction was, according to his estimates, £5,638, which sum had already been paid to the constructor, who was now claiming £2,800 to boot. Mr. Bryson bore testimony that in his opinion, the constructor had already been overpaid by £25 and that the additional claim was not allowable under any consideration. The judge, on a point of law, did not accede to Fr. Melia's petition for damages for wrongful arrest. Commenting on the action, The Times made the following remarks:

> "So much for the outrageous and indecent arrest of a respectable foreigner — a gentleman whose character, station and connection, whose temperate objection, on architect's authority, gave not a fragment of right to suspect that he was a proper subject for such a proceeding. The judge himself, though against Dr. Melia on

a point of law, calls it 'a most improper proceeding' and the jury agree. Such an act is indeed a violation of all the courtesies and equities of English trade even if it is technically legal. It is a disgrace to us a business community or would be a disgrace, did not the whole community rise up at once to repel and denounce it; and it is the worse for being a gross outrage upon a foreigner and a guest." [10]

The repudiation of the community was expressed in the very practical way of a public subscription to enable Dr. Pius Melia to pay for his costs in the action.

Two months previous to the inauguration of the church, Dr. Faa di Bruno was appointed Rector. The nomination was made, curiously enough, by the Vice-Gerent of the Vicariate of Rome. In the Westminster Archives there is a communication to this effect from the Rector-General, Fr. Ignazio Auconi to Cardinal Wiseman, which reads as follows (in translation)

"May it please your Eminence: In my capacity of Rector-General of the Pious Society of Missions, founded in Rome by the Servant of God Vincent Pallotti, it is my duty to inform you that Mgr. Castellacci, Vice-Gerent of Rome, who has been appointed with all faculties by His Holiness the Pope, after hearing the opinion of our General Council, has named Rector of St. Peters's Church and house, the Rev. Joseph Faa di Bruno. Ignazio Auconi, February 20th, 1863." [11]

A few days before the inauguration of the church (April 13th, 1863) Cardinal Wiseman wrote a long letter to Dr. Faa, relative to the services and the purposes of the new church. From the tenor of this letter it is clear that Wiseman wished to limit its activities entirely to Italian speaking people, going so far as to prohibit all services and even sermons in the English language. Ths was, of course a complete reversal of the position taken up years previously by Wiseman himself, who, as Vicar-Apostolic of the London district, when first approached to lend his patronage to the project of building a church for Italians in London, desired that the benefits to accrue from such a church should not be limited to them, but that all foreigners in London might have access to it. In reality, it was in obedience to this directive that for years the projected church was described as, "the Church for All Nations." That point is made clear in a quotation which we made above from the Melia pamphlet, issued in 1852 relative to the church. Our Society

[10] The Times 22.8.63.
[11] Westminster Arch. V. 1863.

was not, of course, satisfied with this abrupt decision of His Eminence and when the Superiors learned that Cardinal Wiseman had referred the matter to Propoganda, they felt free to obtain support for their point of view.

Staying in Rome at this time was a living witness to the intentions and hopes of our Blessed Founder centered on the London church. This was Mr. Walter Tempest, who wrote a long letter to the Propaganda, in the course of which, after stating that he came to know Vincent Pallotti in 1842, he went on to say:

> "I affirm that the mind of the Servant of God was that this church should serve mainly for the Italians in London, and also for all Catholics, because he knew of the great need for churches in London, and that is why he wanted the church to be a large one, so that all, Italians and others, foreigners and British, should find room in it." [12]

The Cardinal's decision that no English-language sermons or services were to be held in the church was not relished by the large English-speaking population residing in the neighbourhood. They accordingly presented to His Eminence "A humble Petition, from the Frequenters of St. Peter's Italian Church, Hatton Garden." It is a printed sheet, in which, after protestations of loyalty and obedience to His Eminence, they go on to say:

> "We, the undersigned petitioners, frequenters of St. Peter's church are chiefly English and Irish Catholics (some of us are also Protestant well-wishers of the cause) who reside either in the densely-populated locality in which the church stands, or who frequently come from a distance to attend the beautiful services which are carried out so fully in this commodious sacred edifice... We ask of your Eminence the great privilege of being allowed to hear the sublime truths of religion preached and the principles and practices of the Church expounded occasionally in a language which may reach our limited understanding and happily move our hearts nearer to God by the good Fathers of the Mission, whose services to the English Church are already well known." [13]

Two months after the blessing of the church, the new organ (by Horton) was installed. That organ was a great help to the splendour of the services, but it brought trouble in its wake, as will be seen.

---

[12] Arch. Gen. Busta It. Church.
[13] Arch. Gen. ib.

was not, of course, satisfied with this abrupt decision of His Eminence and when the Superiors learned that Cardinal Wiseman had referred the matter to Propoganda, they felt free to obtain support for their point of view.

Staying in Rome at this time was a living witness to the intentions and hopes of our Blessed Founder centered on the London church. This was Mr. Walter Tempest, who wrote a long letter to the Propaganda, in the course of which, after stating that he came to know Vincent Pallotti in 1842, he went on to say:

> "I affirm that the mind of the Servant of God was that this church should serve mainly for the Italians in London, and also for all Catholics, because he knew of the great need for churches in London, and that is why he wanted the church to be a large one, so that all, Italians and others, foreigners and British, should find room in it." [12]

The Cardinal's decision that no English-language sermons or services were to be held in the church was not relished by the large English-speaking population residing in the neighbourhood. They accordingly presented to His Eminence "A humble Petition, from the Frequenters of St. Peter's Italian Church, Hatton Garden." It is a printed sheet, in which, after protestations of loyalty and obedience to His Eminence, they go on to say:

> "We, the undersigned petitioners, frequenters of St. Peter's church are chiefly English and Irish Catholics (some of us are also Protestant well-wishers of the cause) who reside either in the densely-populated locality in which the church stands, or who frequently come from a distance to attend the beautiful services which are carried out so fully in this commodious sacred edifice... We ask of your Eminence the great privilege of being allowed to hear the sublime truths of religion preached and the principles and practices of the Church expounded occasionally in a language which may reach our limited understanding and happily move our hearts nearer to God by the good Fathers of the Mission, whose services to the English Church are already well known." [13]

Two months after the blessing of the church, the new organ (by Horton) was installed. That organ was a great help to the splendour of the services, but it brought trouble in its wake, as will be seen.

---

12 Arch. Gen. Busta It. Church.
13 Arch. Gen. ib.

It does not appear that Cardinal Wiseman receded immediately from the position he had taken up with regard to the Italian Church. In May of 1864 we find him writing to Cardinal Barnabò, Cardinal-Prefect of Propaganda, complaining of the magnitude of the debts burdening the Italian Church and expressing doubts about the ability of the Fathers to pay these debts and suggesting that it might be better to hand the church over to some other congregation which would assume the burden! Coincidentally there appeared a news-item in The Tablet asserting that:

> "The Italian Church is now in great need, so great that there is danger of its being taken possession of by the mortgagees and sold." [14]

The Cardinal's letter to Cardinal Barnabò was followed by a visit to the latter by Fr. Pius Melia, acting as Wiseman's agent. Fr. Pius Melia was still one of the church Trustees, and was still liable for the contracts he had signed for the building, and he was understandably anxious to be relieved of responsibility and we do not doubt that at least some of his anxiety he transmitted to the Cardinal. Anyhow, while on this visit to Rome he approached our Fathers to suggest to them that one way out of the impasse, as he conceived it, would be to hand over the church to the Cardinal of Westminster, in return for a compensation covering the amount of Society money expended on it. His proposal was of course rejected, for by this time Propaganda had been informed of the Papal Rescript, obtained by our Founder in 1848, which guaranteed the possession and administration of the church to our Society in perpetuity. It was really the wisdom and foresight of our Founder which saved the day. Poor Fr. Pius Melia was then reduced to suggesting to Propaganda that the church should be placed under an English-speaking Rector of the secular clergy — a suggestion which ran directly counter to the argument which Wiseman had put forward to justify his prohibition of English-language sermons.

Tradition has it that behind all these moves and countermoves of Cardinal Wiseman was his desire to obtain possession of the church for his pro-Cathedral. Cardinal Wiseman was fond of ample and florid ceremonies and was much circumscribed by the small, ill-lighted and plain London churches. His pro-Cathedral at Moorfields was a typical example. It was said that when

---

[14] Tablet 28.5.64.

he came to know the proportions of the Italian church under construction, he felt that here at last was a building after his own heart, which, with the exercise of a little diplomacy, might be secured.

The assertion made in The Tablet — quoted above — was disconcerting; the more so because Fr. Faa di Bruno was on the Continent at the time, continuing with the good work of collecting. Dr. Faa returned in September and The Tablet records that he succeeded in securing an important contribution — one thousand pounds from a gentleman in Padua, who contributed this sum through the agency of the Propaganda. "The most urgent payments" The Tablet goes on to announce, "have now been made." [15]

In spite of all obstacles and difficulties, the Fathers at the Italian Church were looking ahead of their problems. The church would not be able to do its work efficiently unless schools could be established in connection with it; unless too, a hospital could be erected. And in order to fulfill the first of these objectives, it seemed eminently suitable that a congregation of religious Sisters should be induced to take up the task. So it was done, and the Sisters of the Precious Blood — a religious society founded by St. Gaspar del Bufalo, whom Vincent Pallotti assisted on his death-bed — came to London, where a residence was found for them at Queen's Square. This was in 1863. We do not know if they ever succeeded in opening a school in the neighbourhood of the Italian church. A couple of years later we hear of them in Burton-Crescent, where they instituted a night refuge. Finally they withdrew and returned to Italy.

We have mentioned the organ. The Italian race has for centuries excelled in the gentle arts of music and song. Companies of their singers and musicians had long been accustomed to tour the great cities of Europe; musical London has always had a warm welcome and a deep admiration for them. Hence it happened that the new Italian church, provided with a fine organ, was in a position to secure the voluntary services of these great artists and so make the services more attractive and help with the collection of funds to pay off the debts. Rossini's great Stabat Mater was at this time a much-admired piece and the Covent Garden Italian companies got into the way of giving weekly performance of the Stabat on Friday afternoons at the Italian

---

[15] Ib. 17.9.64.

church. It helped the funds very considerably, and it helped also to bring in converts, for Dr. Faa insisted on preaching, or having preached short simple explanatory courses on the Catholic religion to the congregation during the intervals — and many members of the congregation were music-lovers of all faiths, or none at all. The performances of the Stabat, which went on sporadically for years, were well advertised in the Press and by posters. A very old priest once told this writer that most of the congregation came from other parts of London and that the nearest tube station to the church had a sign which stated: "This way to the Italian Church" for the attendants had learned by experience that many strangers to the station were there in order to proceed to hear the Stabat Mater.

Cardinal Wiseman, himself a great lover of Italian music, did not view with favour these musical performances in church; he was particularly repelled by the advertisements appearing in the papers and by posters on walls. His wishes on the subject were complied with. Wiseman died early in 1865 and was succeeded by Henry Edward Manning, with whom the menbers of our Society in England developed a cordial relationship. Manning, a convert himself, viewed with warm interest the efforts of our priests to present the Catholic religion to their non-Catholic neighbours. The Wiseman prohibition against preaching in English at the Italian church was removed; our priests were given parish responsibilities and our position became assured.

The size and central position of the Italian Church in London provided our priests with the opportunity for holding that most typical of all Pallottine ceremonies — the solemn celebration of the Epiphany Octave, the most precious of our inheritances from our Blessed Founder. The first Solemn Octave held in London took place in the year 1866 and it followed, as closely as possible, the Roman model. The other religious Orders in the city gave their services for High Masses on the Octave mornings; there were sermons in various languages and popular sermons in the evenings. This Octave was yearly celebrated in our church, for almost thirty years till changing custom and, perhaps, some neglect, gradually deprived it of popular attendance and at last it was abandoned.

While the church was building, the foundations of a clergy house were laid at Back Hill, walls were constructed and part of the edifice roofed. A portion of this unfinished construction was put to use as a temporary sacristy as soon as the church was

completed. The architectural style of the church called for extensive attics and here the priests transferred their living quarters until the house could be completed. But the unexpected expenses incurred over the church had necessitated, as we have seen, the incurring of a large debt, and this had to be met before the house could be finished. For several years the priests continued to live in the attics, in great discomfort.

> "We are at present living in the attics of the church, without fire in winter, uncomfortably hot in summer. There is no parlour in which visitors can be received and we cannot offer hospitality to guests. The clergy who came to the Octave celebrations had to be received in the sacristy." [16]

Thus wrote Dr. Faa di Bruno to Archibshop Manning, on April 21st, 1866. The unfinished clergy house was an object of curiosity, and perhaps compassion, to the public. The latter sentiment is expressed by a correspondent in the Tablet who wrote:

> "For three years past the house attached to St. Peter's church, and which was begun to be erected for the home of the clergy, has been suffered to remain with its bare walls, roofless and the timber rotting from exposure to the weather... A sum of money is required to provide these our faithful clergy, with a home." [17]

Dr. Faa remarked in his letter that the unfinished house conveyed the impression, to those who did not know the story, that either there had a fire or the proprietors had become bankrupt when the building was half-was through! The cost of completion of this building was, we learn from the same letter, about £1,600 and the Fathers were fearful of assuming the responsibility for so much extra indebtedness; some were in favour of building a smaller, cheaper house on another part of the property. In the end, the clergy house was completed, but not without some delay and hardship.

The basement of the church was this time being used for a school, in spite of the poor light, which made it necessary for gaslight to be employed all day. St. Peter's Church School has flourished uninterpetedly ever since.

Financial problems continued to press on the church and the community. We get a picture of their straits by the following excerpt from another London Catholic newspaper.

---

[16] Westminster Archives. 1866.
[17] Tablet 15.10.65.

"On Wednesday the Archbishop of Westminster (Dr. Manning) presided at a déjeuner at the Crystal Palace, in aid of the funds of the Italian church. The Rev. Dr. Faa di Bruno and the other clergy of the church were present, as also several other London clergy and the Rev. Canon Quinlivan of Cambridge... In his speech the Archbishop proposed the health of the clergy of the Italian church and wade a warm eulogy of the zeal and devotedness and the manner in which they had been aided by the laity of their congregation. His Grace specially coupled with the toast the name of Dr. Faa di Bruno, the senior priest of the church. He then read the heads of a financial statement of the church by which it appeared that the debt was now £5,000, an increase of that debt having been lately made partly by the expenses incurred in erecting a suitable house for the clergy residence and partly for the schools. The income of the church had suffered a diminution to the extent of £160 per annum by the withdrawal of the grant hitherto made by the Italian Government towards the support of the church. This was an economy believed to be necessitated by the present financial state of the Italian Government. His Grace believed that it would be only temporary and that Italy, under a good Government, would soon be able to develop her boundless resources... He congratulated the clergy and congregation because they had recently secured the services of the Sisters of the Precious Blood to take charge of the schools. That was an Order dear to the heart of Pius IX because they were very active in serving the poor of Rome..." [18]

Towards the end of this year the priests were enabled to erect a temporary parish hall, to be used for lectures and concerts, on the strip of land between the church and Hatton Wall. This edifice served its purpose for some years until the site was cleared and built over with houses.

Dr. Faa di Bruno, a great maker of converts, had a certain joy in controversy. There was a Vicar of Clerkenwell, named Robert Maguire, who enjoyed a sort of reputation from his writings and his lectures, which were strongly anti-Catholic in tone. The year of which we write, 1868, was witnessing a recrudescence of no-Popery, for the ultra-Protestants of the Three Kingdoms were smarting under the passage of the Irish Church Act of 1867 which was regarded as a covert gesture of friendship towards Catholics. Mr. Maguire could find nothing better to do than to deliver a nine-day course of lectures on the iniquities of the Catholic religion, as practiced in Ireland and the Continent, and the dangers which it represented to the British public. His books and pamphlets, of which there

---

[18] Westminster Gazette 27.4.67.

were several, were assiduously circulated in the neighbourhood and caused some talk. Dr. Faa was not loath to join in the fray and before long a pamphlet entitled "Maguire and his Lectures on the Smithfield Martyrs," which is described as "sold by Miss Price, 59, Hatton Garden" was also being circulated; copies were given away at the door of Mr. Maguire's lecture-hall. This pamphlet bore no signature, but everyone knew that Dr. Faa was responsible for it. It is trenchant and quite confident in tone. For instance, the pamphlet does not seek very far for a motive behind the lectures: it alleges that there are elections in the near offing and Mr. Maguire hopes to drum up some votes for the Tories. Mr. Maguire's opinions about Ireland, very unflattering, are neatly countered by the reproduction of a Letter on Ireland sent to the Lord Chief Justice of Ireland, Lord Tenterdon, by the famous William Cobbett in 1829.

Mr. Maguire speedily replied with another pamphlet entitled "Who slew all These?" addressed to "The Roman Catholic Priests of the Italian Church, Hatton Garden," in which he gives the usual anti-Catholic version of the heresy trials under Queen Mary. According to his own statement, the pamphlet had a circulation of ten thousand copies and he expected an answer. On the advice, however, of Archbishop Manning, conveyed by Fr. Herbert Vaughan, who was at this time Manning's Private Secretary, Dr. Faa desisted. He wrote a private letter to Mr. Maguire informing him of this:

> "In obedience and submission to my Archbishop, I am sorry to be obliged to decline to enter into controversy with you."

Mr. Maguire published the correspondence between himself and Dr. Faa in a subsequent re-issue of his pamphlet.

Dr. Faa di Bruno's term as Rector of the Italian Church came to an end on March 3rd 1669, when by a Decree of the Visitator-General, Archbishop Passavalli, he was appointed Rector-General of the Society. He left behind him in the London house the following priests: Raphael Melia, Aemilian Kirner, Raphael Nenci, Dominic Crescitelli and Horace Corbucci. Frs. Raphael Melia, and Kirner have already been mentioned in our story. Fr. Nenci withdrew from our Society in 1881 and became parish priest of Swinburn in Northumberland, where he died in 1909. Fr. Horace Corbucci was born in Rimini, Italy, in 1830. His first vocation was the law, in which he obtained

doctorates in both civil and canon law; finding himself called to the priesthood, he went to Rome where he was ordained priest in 1862. Shortly afterwards he left for Haiti where he served as missionary till 1867, when his health broke down. In June of that year he came to London where he stayed with the Fathers at the Italian church. A man of generous and apostolic inclinations, he was much attracted by our style of life, with which he had already come in contact during his student days in Rome. On the 8th of December 1867 he took the Pallottine habit and was professed on the 9th of January 1869. During his novitiate, and as far as his health allowed, he helped the fathers in looking after the Italian population around Hatton Garden. He contracted, however, typhoid fever and on the 25th of April 1869 he passed away. He was visited on his death bed by Archbishop Manning, who was impressed and edified by the poverty of the rooms in which the Fathers were living. When the Requiem *praesente corpore,* was celebrated, Manning came to preside and addressed the congregation in moving words. His remains were laid to rest in Kensal Green Cemetery, the first Pallottine to rest in English soil.

By the same Decree with which Dr. Faa di Bruno was appointed Rector General of the Society, Fr. Aemilian Kirner was named Rector of the London House.

CHAPTER IV

When Dr. Faa di Bruno became General of the Society, its membership consisted of twelve priests and eight brothers, grouped in two houses, one in London, and one in Rome. This poverty in numbers was indeed a grave obstacle in the way of the realization of the ideals of the Founder, but graver still was the fact that no definite Rule of life for the Society had been adopted. The members were living on tradition. The fact that the Founder had left behind him a great many documents and directives, served no doubt to keep this tradition alive and possibly inspired the Holy See, in its dealings with our community, to treat the little plant with kindness and patience, in the hope that finally the members would come to unanimity amongst themselves as to the juridical ordering of their institute. For unanimity was lacking. Perhaps the main cause of dissent was the number of the Promises which the Rules demanded of the members. In 1851 a decision was taken in the General Council that these promises should be seven, but the London Fathers resisted this enumeration, on the grounds that the Seventh Promise -- in honour of the Holy Trinity — did not in their view respond to any directive of the Founder, whom they had known and venerated personally. The decision of the General Council was not ratified by the Holy See when approbation was sought for it and so the matter stayed in abeyance till 1855, when Dr. Raphael Melia, who by this time had come to Rome in order to take over the office which Vaccari, mortally ill, could no longer fulfill, decided to draw up a Rule which in his view would express the true mind of the Founder. This he did and secured for his compilation the approval of the Cardinal Vicar of Rome on the 10th of October, 1855. Melia's Rule reduced the number of Promises to four but this reduction did not meet with the approval of the majority of the brethern. The Melia compilation was therefore withdrawn and affairs stayed *in statu quo ante.* On his appointment as Rector-General Dr. Faa di Bruno attemp-

ted to solve the problem, which was seriously holding up the progress of the Society. He accordingly drew up a Manual based insofar as ascetical and apostolic aspirations were concerned, on the Founder's writings, but reducing the Promises to two, which included the substance of the other four. This Rule was submitted to the approval of the Cardinal-Vicar of Rome, obtained his approbation on the 26th of November of the year 1869, and was printed. This approval was withdrawn two months later and the edition of the Manual was held up; as a consequence copies of it are extremely rare. The matter continued without solution till, in 1880, the summary of the Rule composed by Our Founder and known as the Thirty-Three Points was printed and put into circulation. This document, however, though it is an ascetic guide of great importance, is not a legislative code and hence it ceded place to the Constitutions of 1890, which in turn gave way to the Constitutions of 1903. Our gratitude to Faa di Bruno for providing the Society with the Thirty-Three Points as an agreed spiritual guide cannot be minimized, for it put an end to the internal dissentions which were holding back our community from realizing its future. The second problem to engage his attention was the recruitment of new members. There is a peculiar and deadly blight engendered by the anticlericalism of the nineteenth century whose effects first appeared in the vocational field. In earlier ages it was normal for young men to discover in themselves a vocation for the altar and to decide on it towards the end of the secondary school period; that is, at the stage when most young men choose secular careers for themselves. It is not easy to establish what blight descended on the generosity and the spirit of sacrifice of the Catholic youths of the nineteenth century, but blight it was and its immediate evidence is to be found in the great retraction from the clerical career and from the religious life. The tide which began to run out during the last century in the Latin world has not yet turned, as turn it will some day, but the bishops of the Catholic world, and the superiors of the religious orders have had to struggle mightily in order to survive, let along make progress. It has not been an easy struggle. Bishops and superiors, in their despair, have been known to attempt their recruitment amongst little boys of nine or even eight years of age; the inducement of free, or almost free, education has been held out in many countries,

with indifferent results — in short, a long-continued crisis situation.

Frs. Melia and Faa di Bruno were interested from the beginning in recruiting vocations to the Society in England, as we have seen, but there was no provision made for their intake, beyond sending them to Rome to make their studies and their preparation in that city. The long-drawn-out process of the construction of the Italian Church and the payment of its debt also absorbed their attention and their energies, but now, as Dr. Faa commenced his generalate that other problem was under control and he was free to turn his attention and his organizating ability to the question of recruitment. His efforts in Rome and in the city of Terni do not concern this story, but the colleges of Ipswich (1872-1882) and Masio (1878-) do, and at this stage we will deal with them.

In the month of September of the year 1871 Dr. Faa di Bruno was on a visit to England and one morning, in the sacristy of the Italian Church he met a Fr. Redman who told him of a chapel recently erected by a Mr. North, of Kirtling Tower, near Newmarket. This gentleman, a recent convert, was anxious to secure the services of a priest for his chapel. Dr. Faa mentioned to Fr. Redman that the Society was anxious to obtain a foundation in England which could serve as a novitiate for English boys. Fr. Redman considered that here was a chance; as a result Dr. Faa went to stay at Cambridge with his friend Canon Quinlivan and after consultation with the latter, wrote to Mr. North, who invited him to pay a visit to Kirtling Tower. His stay was prolonged for six months and during it the chapel was opened to public worship to the few Catholics who lived in the neighbourhood. Dr. Faa may therefore be considered the founder of the Mission of Kirtling Tower. His name appears in the Baptism registers of the mission from 21st September 1871 till February 25th, 1872. They are the first entries.

Dr. Faa compiled a Diary during his stay in Kirtling Towers and from it we learn that he made it a practice to visit the farmers and cottagers in the neighbourhood ,to whom he used to offer tracts and engage in religious discussion and that he made quite a few converts in this fashion. He also paid a couple of visits to the local Vicar and one Sunday went to the service. " I was seated " he explains, " all through the

Service, except at the Gospel. I gave nothing to the collection, not knowing what it was for.[1]"

There were a couple of cottages on the estate, which Mr. North offered to Dr. Faa for the purposes of a novitiate; the same gentleman offered to furnish them partially and to link them up with a covered passage.

During his stay here Dr. Faa spend his leisure time in composing a pamphlet or tract on the Catholic religion, which he proposed to use for distribution amongst non-Catholics. We shall refer again to this work when we come to deal with the literary activities of our early fathers in England.

Kirthling Tower lies in the diocese of Northampton, whose Bishop was at this time Dr. Francis Kerril Amherst (1819-1883) who as a very young priest had assisted at the Epiphany Octave celebrations in Rome in 1847 and had known our Blessed Founder there. Learning from Canon Quinlivan of Cambridge that our Fathers were on the lookout for a country mission and that Dr. Faa was staying in Kirtling Tower he offered us the church of St. Pancras in the ancient town of Ipswich. The mission was burdened with a considerable — for the period — debt. After some negotiation, in the course of which it was established that our Fathers would take over and pay off the debt with the understanding that if ever we left the Mission we should be recouped to that amount, the house and parish of St. Pancras was handed over to us at the beginning of the year 1872. When, at one moment in the negotiations it appears that we would not be able to take over, the Bishop himself intervened — for the business was being transacted by the Vicar-General, Dr. Oleron — and wrote as follows to Dr. Faa.

> "I am most unwilling to give up the hope of your settling at Ipswich. The veneration which I have for your saint-like Founder and for the spirit of your rule, gave me the greatest delight when I heard of the project of your going to a mission in the diocese; and I trust still that you may be able to overcome the objections of your brethren and that we may be able to welcome you among us."[2]

The fathers, it may be gathered from the above letter, were not unanimous about the taking of Ipswich. Not only

---

[1] Arch. Gen. Busta Socii: Faa.
[2] Irish Province Archives-Ipswich Payers.

was there the debt, but the former parish priest, a Fr. Wallace, who had charge of the two Catholic churches in the town, had taken up residence at the second church and had let the clergy house adjoining St. Pancras; there was moreover a languishing parish school which had to be kept up; finally, a very small parish income. However, a majority of the Council in London approved of the proposition and Dr. Kirner was appointed the first Superior. He proceeded to rent a house until such time as he could repossess the clergy house, which after some years he succeeded in doing.

The church of St. Pancras in Ipswich was erected with funds from a legacy left by a French priest who had worked for many years in England. It was blessed in 1861; there was another church in the town already and the number of Catholics was small, so that a single priest served both churches. Dr. Amherst, second Bishop of Northampton considered Ipswich of strategical importance for the spread of Catholicism in England and suggested to Rome that a diocese of Ipswich should be created, with the episcopal See in the town itself. This was in spite of the fact that it was an exceedingly anti-Catholic place at that time, as the bishop himself must have known, from an incident which came to his notice.

> "You will be sorry to hear that the 'Baron de Camin', an anti-popery lecturer, has created a riot in Ipswich, during which the priests' windows were broken and the convent threatened."[3]

It was the intention of our Fathers to use St. Pancras as a house for students and novices of the society till better quarters could be found. It was moreover a sort of challenge to our Society, composed hitherto exclusively of foreigners. What sort of pastoral work could these men do in an English country town? Father Kirner had been trained by Dr. Faa in the apostolate of conversions and he was not slow to set about this ministry in Ipswich. "The Suffolk Chronicle" published a short article under the title "Romanism in Ipswich," as follows:

> "A good and sound churchman, rather 'high' calls our attention to the subjoined extract from the 'Church Times' and says our friends should see to it if untrue, to contradict it; if true, to stop its being a continuing truth. Now, we must leave our friends to please themselves. There are weak heads in all congregations and if A, B or C cannot make good Protestants and can make good

[3] Life of Bp. Amherst, by Mary Frances Roskell, London p. 258.

RCs and through Purgatory get to Heaven, why so be it. It is satisfactory to know they have halted at no half-way temple, in which there is Romish caricature, but gone to the genuine old-fashioned house where the real article may be had. As to dissenting converts we half fancy, however, that Dr. Kirner, the able and learned Minister of St. Pancras would rather not say how many 'converts' can be traced from the Tower. 'Let the current run' will be the Doctor's first thought. Here is the paragraph referred to: 'Romanism in Ipswich'. There is at the present time a very active Romish priest in this town, the Rev. Dr. A.E. Kirner, who is making a large number of 'converts', the average being two per week, and upon enquiry we learn from the Rev. gentleman himself that the largest number are from the nonconformist bodies in the town." [4]

In the absence of more precise documentation, we have compiled the following list of Pallottine priests who either entered or performed some part of their professional studies in the Ipswich house. The first is Fr. Joseph Bannin, who was professed on January 20th, 1872, and was ordained priest on the 18th December, 1875, by the Bishop of Northampton:

"Dr. Amherst held an ordination on Ember Saturday: amongst the priests ordained was the Rev. Joseph Bannin of the Pious Society of Missions, whose mother and sister were present, also Drs. Kirner and Scott, and the Revs. Stokes and Murray." [5]

Fr. Bannin is to recur in our story; we will deal more extensively with his personality and achievements further on.

The next is Fr. Alfred Meager, who was professed on the 8th of September of 1874 and was ordained priest on the 23rd of September 1876. He was a native of Newport, Isle of Wight and had a brother who was a secular priest. The tradition is that before studying for the priesthood he was married, and on the death of his wife resolved to dedicate the rest of his life to God. Two years after his ordination he appears to have withdrawn from the Society, for we find him attached to Oscott College in 1878. He then served in the Isle of Wight for a year, and from 1880 to 1883 in Greenhithe, Sussex. In 1884 he went to Deptford and about 1889 rejoined the Society. In 1890 he went to our house at Valparaiso, Chile, where he served as Rector for some months and then returned to London and here he spent the remainder of his life. His death occurred

---

[4] Suffolk Chronicle. 28.12.72.
[5] Life of Bp. Amherst, p. 322.

on the 10th of December, 1916. Somewhat eccentric, he made many friends in the Port of London and it was his habit, every couple of years or so, to take a trip to some distant part of the world as super-cargo on a tramp steamer.

Fr. Henry Arkell was a native of Ipswich, a convert to the Faith, who entered the Society about the same time as Fr. Whitmee. After his ordination, which took place in Rome, he served in London and later as Rector of Hastings. At one period of his career he served on our missions in Brazil and in Montevideo, after which he left the Society. He died in Paris in the twenties.

Fr. William Whitmee, who was born in Norfolk in 1851, made his profession on the 2nd of February, 1876 and was ordained in Rome two years later. His career and his signal services to the Society are well known. His name will occur frequently in our story. This writer had the pleasure, some years ago, of drawing up, on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee of Thurles College, a small Memoir of Father Whitmee [6].

Fr. Vincent Kopf was a native of Germany who came to England as a boy; owing to the influence of Fr. Kirner, he joined the Society at Ipswich about 1875 and was sent to Rome a couple of years later, where he was ordained in 1882. His first missionary work was performed at the Italian Church and in 1886 he went to Brazil, and later to Montevideo. He later became the first Provincial Superior of the Limburg Province.

The vital statistics and the career of Fr. Michael Carmody may be drawn in part from a little Memoir which was written many years ago. It says:

> " Fr. Michael Carmody was born in London, of Limerick parents, on January 17th 1857. At least this is the date given in the Catalogue, but I have known him to say that it made him a year older than he really was. His father was a bank employee and was apparently in easy circumstances. The son was sent to a Catholic college — Blackheath — which has long since disappeared. I have heard him relate that he used to assist as an altar-boy at the Pro-Cathedral, St. Mary's Moorfields and that he was present in that capacity at Archbishop's Manning's consecration and had to sit on the steps of the throne at one portion of the service. In his flurry he sat too near the archiepiscopal toe and when the prelate arose, young Michael was tumbled down the steps. As a young man Michael Carmody used to frequent the presbytery of Canon Oakeley in Islington. This was one of the most famous of the Oxford Converts who was engaged at this time in republishing the

[6] Memoir of Fr. Whitmee, by J. S. Gaynor, The S. Cross, Bs. As. 1958.

Douai Bible. His sight was very dim and young Carmody used to read proofs for him and act generally as his secretary. He was accustomed to assist at the services of the Italian Church, then very famous for the perfection of its ceremonies and at length he resolved to join the community of the Fathers. Canon Oakeley tried to dissuade him from taking this step, and, when young Carmody asked his blessing before joining the Pallottines, Oakeley refused it. His first steps as a member of the community were taken at the Italian Church until he went to Ipswich, in the company of Brother (Aloysius) Monselle, under Fr. Kirner... After his profession he was sent to Masio, and was the first student to enter the new college there. Fr. Kirner, Bro. Aloysius and himself arrived at Felizzano station and proceeded to walk to Abbazia, laden with great bales of bedclothes and other objects... The professors at Abbazia were Fr. Faa di Bruno, Fr. Kirner and an Italian priest, whose name this writer does not recollect... he was ordained priest at Asti and celebrated his first Mass in the parish church of Masio. An idea of the dearth of subjects in the society can be gleaned from the fact that immediately after his ordination, which took place on the 3rd of June, 1882, he was appointed Professor of Philosophy and Theology, for Dr. Faa di Bruno, the regular Professor in these subjects, had to go to Rome for six weeks... Fr. Carmody's first mission was London, where Cardinal Manning was still Archbishop, and from this prelate he received his first faculties. He visited Cardinal Manning for this purpose and found him in his apartment at York Place, in a sort of garret at the top of the house, sitting over a small fire. The Cardinal advised him that during his priestly career he should never refuse absolutions to any penitent, unless there was no other way out. 'As though' Fr. Carmody used to say when he recalled the incident, 'I would ever think of doing otherwise'... When Fr. Bannin became Vicar-General of the Society, Fr. Carmody became Rector of the Italian Church... About 1885 he went on a holiday to Italy. He visited Rome, Naples and then Venice. As he was crossing the Piazza of San Marco in the last city, on his way home, the attendant of the hotel where he had stayed came running after him with a telegram. It was from the General in Rome, appointing him Superior of New York. He went down to Rome and made it a condition of his acceptance that Fr. Kugelmann should accompany him. In New York he became much interested in the welfare of the Negroes and hence accepted, for the Society, a Mission amongst the Negroes in the South. He continued with the work of building the schools of the Mount Carmel Church. Ultimately he had to withdraw from New York because he did not agree with the action of the Vicar-General in a matter affecting the school personnel. At this period the famous Single Tax question was being much debated amongst the clergy of New York and Father Carmody knew a great deal on the subject and was always willing to air his views about it. After his return to Europe, he was appointed Rector of the International College in Rome.[7]

[7] Irish Province Archives, Ipswich Papers.

We shall have occasion to refer to Fr. Carmody later on. The next of the Ipswich vocations is Father Aloysius Monselle. He was born in London in 1861, of mixed Anglo-French parentage and received his early education at Douai College of the Benedictine Order, which at the time was situated in the town of the same name in France. At the age of 16 he joined our community as an aspirant, was sent to Ipswich where he commenced his training and late transferred to Masio (as we have seen in the account quoted above). He was ordained at the end of 1884 and first went on the mission in London, where he became much interested in the temperance movement. He was then sent to New York where after some years as assistant he was named Rector in 1892, but was compelled by ill-health to resign. In 1898 he was named Superior of Hastings where he was instrumental in founding the mission of Rye. In 1902 he was named Procurator General of the Society and took up his residence in San Silvestro, where, after a short illness, he died on the 19th of November, 1904. "Innocent of life" his Obituary states " knowing none of the evils of the world, he was a true and zealous priest, a staunch friend and an earnest worker in every Catholic cause."

Stet more names remain to be mentioned before we finish with the story of the studentate of Ipswich: Fathers Francis Gocher, Augustine Gough and William Gough. They were natives of the town of Ipswich and though they entered the Society after the closure of the college, it was through it that they came into contact with the Society. Francis Gocher was ordained in Rome, after doing studies in Masio, and died at Hastings on: November 26th, 1891. Fr. Augustine Gough studied in Masio and Rome, and was ordained in Rome in 1890 and was sent to the Argentine mission immediately after ordination. His name will recurr with frequency. Fr. William Gough was the younger brother of Augustine, studied in Rome, was ordained in 1900 and three years later, while attached to the Mount Carmel Church in New York, left our Society for the Jesuits. They were natives of Woodbridge, in the neighbourhood of Ipswich. And finally there was Fr. Joseph Banks, also a native of Ipswich.

Let us take up again the history of our Ipswich house. When Fr. Kirner left for Masio in 1878, he was replaced at St. Pancras by Fr. Joseph Bannin. During his stay there an election came up and he ran for membership of the town

council, on the educational side, and secured a place at the head of the poll with four thousand votes.

In the year 1881 the Bishop of Northampton, Dr. Riddell, intimated that he wished to take back the parish of St. Pancras, as he was needing places for his own clergy. Our superiors stated that they had no objection, provided that he compensated them for the amounts spent on clearing the original mortgage, and when, after some negotiations, the Bishop acceded, our Fathers withdrew. A resumé of their work in Ipswich during the ten years of occupancy may be gathered from the following memorandum, which was drawn up by Dr. Kirner for the Bishop:

> "Before the mission of St. Pancras was given to us, the two Catholic Churches and the entire Catholic population of Ipswich, amounting to about three hundred Catholics, were in charge of one priest. On our taking possession of it at the repeated requests of the late Bishop, the town was divided into two districts, leaving in that of St. Pancras one hundred and sixty Catholics, children included. Of these Catholics, there are left at present only seventy-two. From 1872 to 1882 four hundred and thirty-six converts were received, according to the Baptismal Register, Some years ago the congregation numbered about six hundred, but unfortunately the stagnation of trade, strikes of workmen, etc. have caused several factories to close and discharge several hundreds of the hands and these circumstances have reduced the number of Catholics very much of late. The Catholics of Ipswich had to contend with exceptional difficulties beyond any other town in the East of England — Ipswich being noted for its bigotry and religious prejudices and its frequent ebullitions of popular feeling against them, as instanced by the almost yearly attacks on the convent and priest's residence. These attacks were always connived at and often abetted by the town authorities. The late election of Fr. Bannin as a member of the School Board, who was placed by over four thousand votes amongst the first on the poll, and the entire cessation of popular outbreaks against us, as also the universal regret expressed by the people and Press at Fr. Bannin's departure and that of his predecessor prove sufficiently how much had been done by our Society in softening down the anti-catholic spirit which formerly prevailed. More than ordinary financial difficulties have always been encountered by the priests of Ipswich even before we went there. Those were owing to the great poverty of the people, most of them being labourers earning an average about fifteen shillings a week for the support of a whole family. Hence it is impossible for them to give much towards the support of the church. During our first year the Sunday offerings did not amount to a pound a week. The quarterly endowment of £25 was more than absorbed by the repairs to the church, house, school and cottages. The Catholic

girls and infants of the whole town go to the Convent schools. The Rector of St. Pancras opened a Boys' School and had to pay a schoolmaster a salary which inclusive of school pence often exceeded the total amount of the Sunday collection and offertories for the whole year. Under these circumstances it may easily be concluded that we had to depend for our maintenance in St. Pancras on other sources than the church income and endowment and in fact our yearly expenses were principally paid by the pensions of novices and students kept there by our Society, by assistance from our house in London and by the private means of the Rector. Although the mission of St. Pancras is of late origin, it bears, we think, favourable comparison in the work it has been doing with the neighbouring missions of Yarmouth and Norwich which were established many years before. We wish to add that for a considerable time we kept two priests there and attended St. Mary's District and Woodbridge during the long absence of Fr. Wallace in South Africa. On his return, there not being work enough for two and no support, according to the rules of our Society we did not keep two priests there any longer. We also supplied the mission of Stowmarket and a year and a half attended as ordinary confessors once a week at Bergholt." [8]

We draw attention to the large number of converts when our priests received into the Church during our occupancy of this mission. Let us return now to the affairs of the Italian Church, which we interrupted at the point when Dr. Faa was named Rector General of the Society, and Dr. Kirner Rector of St. Peter's.

The records show that the new Rector hoped to secure a reversal of the ruling, coming down from Wiseman's reign, which forbade publicity for the execution of the Stabat Mater in the Italian Church of Friday evenings. It was felt that an approach to Archbishop Manning, through Propaganda, might be successful and accordingly Dr. Melia wrote to an old friend who was a high official in that Congregation. In his reply, this friend, Mgr. Achille Rinaldini stated that a reversal of the ruling could not be secured.

"Mgr. Simeoni (secretary of Propaganda) has spoken to the Archbishop, and the Cardinal-Prefect as well, but Archbishop Manning has steadfastly maintained that while there is no difficulty in allowing the 'Stabat Mater' to be sung in the Italian church, there must not be any publicity about it in the papers..." [9]

---

[8] Ib.
[9] Ib. Letters, 9.12.69.

The rulings of Wiseman and Manning referred to such publicity as the Fathers sought in the ordinary media. But they did not exclude the unfavourable comments with which one of the Catholic newspapers of the period — 'The Weekly Register' — thought it well to adorn its issues. The harassed Fathers were not however without defenders. Father George Bampfield, parish priest of Barnet, a leading priest of the archdiocese, founder of a religious community of men (the Society of St. Andrew which after his death went out of existence) wrote as follows to The Tablet:

> "In three recent issues of the Weekly Register a condemnation has been pronounced, as if *ex cathedra* upon certain procedures of the Italian Fathers in their church. Without even waiting for thorough investigation, without making full private inquiry, the paper has, as if it were an authority and a ruler in the Church, given a public decision upon the guilt of some of those whom God has really appointed to rule.. We are governed by bishops and not by journalists... I write this not because I sympathise with 'shilling concerts' or anything approaching them; to my own mind they are utterly distasteful; but because I believe that one instance of such a spirit as that displayed by the remarks of the Register is a greater evil to the Church by far than if we had 'shilling concerts every day in every church in the diocese.'[10]

These were the days when operatic music did not yet sound strange in church. But the purpose of our fathers in putting on this musical effort was not, as we have implied above, the merely utilitarian one of taking up good collections for the purpose of paying off the church debt; there was an apostolic idea behind it, for short sermons on the Catholic religion were preached and a remarkable number of converts received. It was stated in the Press[11] that in the first eight years of its existence from 1863 to 1871, a thousand converts were admitted into the True Fold at the Italian Church. We have heard it said that for years the annual number of conversions registered at the Italian Church was equalled only by those which took place at Farm Street. This fact, taken in conjunction with the figures given by Dr. Kirner in his statement to the Bishop of Northampton which we have quoted above, show that our Fathers in England, who were just a mere handful of foreigners, were second to none in their zeal for conversions. We think

---

[10] Tablet 22.1.69.
[11] Ib. 22.4.71.

we cannot be mistaken in saying that this zeal, so remarkable and so successful, had for its source the ispiration of our Founder, who some of these men had known in the flesh.

There were in the neighbourhood of the Italian Church two large prisons, in both of which our priests served the Catholic inmates. One of these prisons was the Clerkenwell House of Detention, erected in 1845 for prisoners awaiting trial. It was here that, in 1867, the Ferian prisoners Bourke and Casey were held; their companions on the outside, led by Michael Barrett, attempted to deliver them by blowing down the prison wall, with such ill-effect that twelve people were killed and twelve were wounded by the explosion. Not only did no one get out, but Barrett was taken in and the course of time, hanged, the last man to be publicly executed in England. The prison was closed and its inmates transferred in 1877; the site is today occupied by the Hugh Myddleton School. This prison used to be visited almost daily by Fr. Dominic Crescitelli.

The second prison was the Coldbath Fields House of Correction, whose site is today occupied by the Mount Pleasant Post Office. It was a building dating back to the end of the eighteenth century and it was finally closed in 1885. With this institution Dr. Kirner and later Fr. Dominic Crescitelli were connected, first as voluntary, and later as official chaplains.

The ministry of Catholic priests in British gaols had been authorized by Parliament in the year 1863, by virtue of the Act known as the Prison Ministers' Act. The object of this enactment was to provide, whenever in a given gaol the number of prisoners of a particular religion was sufficiently large, in the judgement of the justices, a chaplain who was to receive an emolument for his work. In some places the provision had been liberally made, but in others, particularly in the London area, the matter remained practically at the discretion of the prison authorities. It was ascertained officially, that the daily average of Catholic prisoners in the Coldbath Fields and Clerkenwell House of Detention was four hundred in the year 1868. Fr. Keens, the chaplain of another large London gaol addressed the Lord Mayor, demanding facilities for carrying out his task and applying for a salary, not only for himself but for his colleagues in Clerkenwell and Coldbath Field. His request met intially with approval, but when the details came up later, for discussions, they were turned down.

"By accepting (wrote the Westminster Gazette) the gratuitous services of priests it is evident that their services are necessary; in refusing to pay them as they pay Protestant ministers the magistrates show that their decision is actuated, not by justice, but by bigotry. There is something inexpressibly shabby and contemptible in such conduct. It is another proof how English gentlemen may sometimes lose their sense of fairness and straightforward dealing when their latent Protestant bigotry is excited." [12]

The complaints of the Catholic authorities and the good sense of the Government finally prevailed. At the end of 1869 a Select Committee of the House of Commons was set up to inquire into the working of the Prison Minister's Act and before this Committee, on the 10th of January, 1870, Dr. Kirner and Fr. Crescitelli gave evidence. Dr. Kirner stated that he was Chaplain to the Coldbath Fields prison, which he visited four times a week, from 9.30 to about one o'clock, and on Sundays from 9 to 11, when there was Mass, sermon and prayers. No evening services were allowed for the Catholics, though there was one for the Protestants. The Catholic population was about four hundred persons, but he was not allowed to assemble them, except on Sundays; on other days he could only see them in batches of twelve, a fact which added considerably to his labours. He was, he stated ,first allowed to have Divine Service in the prison in 1867, for which the only object provided by the prison was a table. No salary, allowance or money for the purchase of plate, altar-linen and so on had ever been supplied to him. He complained that quite lately an announcement had been made in the prison that Catholics were free to attend the Protestant evening service.

"The warders came to the door and called out: 'Church!'; the prisoners said: 'But we are Catholics'; the answer of the warders was: 'If you don't go you will be locked up'."

Under such circumstance it need not be wondered at that some of the poor prisoners attended the Protestant service. Fr. Kirner protested to the gaol authorities against this form of proselytism and it was given up. He maintained that if he were given free access to the prisoners, his ministry would be much more efficacions. If he were to be appointed an official chaplain, his position would be assured amongst the personnel, who were inclined to scoff at the Catholic religion. The ser-

---

[12] Westminster Gazette 30.1.69.

we cannot be mistaken in saying that this zeal, so remarkable and so successful, had for its source the ispiration of our Founder, who some of these men had known in the flesh.

There were in the neighbourhood of the Italian Church two large prisons, in both of which our priests served the Catholic inmates. One of these prisons was the Clerkenwell House of Detention, erected in 1845 for prisoners awaiting trial. It was here that, in 1867, the Ferian prisoners Bourke and Casey were held; their companions on the outside, led by Michael Barrett, attempted to deliver them by blowing down the prison wall, with such ill-effect that twelve people were killed and twelve were wounded by the explosion. Not only did no one get out, but Barrett was taken in and the course of time, hanged, the last man to be publicly executed in England. The prison was closed and its inmates transferred in 1877; the site is today occupied by the Hugh Myddleton School. This prison used to be visited almost daily by Fr. Dominic Crescitelli.

The second prison was the Coldbath Fields House of Correction, whose site is today occupied by the Mount Pleasant Post Office. It was a building dating back to the end of the eighteenth century and it was finally closed in 1885. With this institution Dr. Kirner and later Fr. Dominic Crescitelli were connected, first as voluntary, and later as official chaplains.

The ministry of Catholic priests in British gaols had been authorized by Parliament in the year 1863, by virtue of the Act known as the Prison Ministers' Act. The object of this enactment was to provide, whenever in a given gaol the number of prisoners of a particular religion was sufficiently large, in the judgement of the justices, a chaplain who was to receive an emolument for his work. In some places the provision had been liberally made, but in others, particularly in the London area, the matter remained practically at the discretion of the prison authorities. It was ascertained officially, that the daily average of Catholic prisoners in the Coldbath Fields and Clerkenwell House of Detention was four hundred in the year 1868. Fr. Keens, the chaplain of another large London gaol addressed the Lord Mayor, demanding facilities for carrying out his task and applying for a salary, not only for himself but for his colleagues in Clerkenwell and Coldbath Field. His request met intially with approval, but when the details came up later, for discussions, they were turned down.

"By accepting (wrote the Westminster Gazette) the gratuitous services of priests it is evident that their services are necessary; in refusing to pay them as they pay Protestant ministers the magistrates show that their decision is actuated, not by justice, but by bigotry. There is something inexpressibly shabby and contemptible in such conduct. It is another proof how English gentlemen may sometimes lose their sense of fairness and straightforward dealing when their latent Protestant bigotry is excited." [12]

The complaints of the Catholic authorities and the good sense of the Government finally prevailed. At the end of 1869 a Select Committee of the House of Commons was set up to inquire into the working of the Prison Minister's Act and before this Committee, on the 10th of January, 1870, Dr. Kirner and Fr. Crescitelli gave evidence. Dr. Kirner stated that he was Chaplain to the Coldbath Fields prison, which he visited four times a week, from 9.30 to about one o'clock, and on Sundays from 9 to 11, when there was Mass, sermon and prayers. No evening services were allowed for the Catholics, though there was one for the Protestants. The Catholic population was about four hundred persons, but he was not allowed to assemble them, except on Sundays; on other days he could only see them in batches of twelve, a fact which added considerably to his labours. He was, he stated ,first allowed to have Divine Service in the prison in 1867, for which the only object provided by the prison was a table. No salary, allowance or money for the purchase of plate, altar-linen and so on had ever been supplied to him. He complained that quite lately an announcement had been made in the prison that Catholics were free to attend the Protestant evening service.

> "The warders came to the door and called out: 'Church!'; the prisoners said: 'But we are Catholics'; the answer of the warders was: 'If you don't go you will be locked up'."

Under such circumstance it need not be wondered at that some of the poor prisoners attended the Protestant service. Fr. Kirner protested to the gaol authorities against this form of proselytism and it was given up. He maintained that if he were given free access to the prisoners, his ministry would be much more efficacions. If he were to be appointed an official chaplain, his position would be assured amongst the personnel, who were inclined to scoff at the Catholic religion. The ser-

---

[12] Westminster Gazette 30.1.69.

vices were held on Sundays in the Old Protestant chapel, which was large enough and could hold two hundred more persons. The following dialogue then followed:

> "Sir J. Parkington: 'If you have so much accommodation, why do you not hold two services on Sundays?'"
>
> Rev. Dr. Kirner: "Because our application was refused; my predecessor applied and was refused: and I was refused."
>
> Sir J. Parkington: "Then, if there are four hundred prisoners, why do you attend only four days a week?"
>
> Rev. Dr. Kirner: "Because three only were first allowed and when I got the fourth day, I was told that I could take it, but it would be better if I got through in three days; I have not applied for every day because I am persuaded it would be refused; I sent a written petition to be able to visit four days and got only a verbal answer, only through the Governor. I am persuaded that no complaint was ever made against me during my attendance at the prison. As a matter of fact my complaints against chaplains and warders were at once redressed."

Dr. Kirner went on to say that his claim was for recognition of status, for some remuneration and for leave to hold afternoon services. His work would be much more effective if he were granted official status; the prisoners all knew that his presence was now only tolerated. There were in the prison two Protestant Chaplains in addition to schoolmasters and Bible-readers. One fifth of the prison population was Catholic ,and an official Catholic Chaplain was very desirable for their welfare; if dissenting ministers were called in to attend, he saw no reason why they too should not be paid for their services, the cost of which should in his opinion be defrayed out of the County rate.

> "Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen: 'Do you receive instruction from your superiors as to your attendance?"
>
> Dr. Wirner: "No, we do not."
>
> Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen: "Then no rule of your Superiors, no instruction could clash with the prison rules?"
>
> Rev. Dr. Kirner: "No, certainly not."

The justice of the position taken up by Dr. Kirner was acknowledged in a leading article by the very reputable *Pall Mall Gazette*.

> "The average of prisoners in the Coldbath Fields prison is 2000 of whon about 400 are Catholics. The clergyman devotes three hours and a half to his work on four weekdays and has a service on Sundays. He likewise provides out of his own pocket for the vestments, plate and other matters necessary to conduct that ser-

vice properly; and for all this he does not receive one penny remuneration. Yet he is attached to an extremely poor mission — to wit, the Hatton Garden congregation, composed chiefly of Irish and Italians, by whom he is supported. In fact therefore these poverty-stricken creatures defray the cost of the religious instruction given to our prisoners... According to our calculations, if the Rev. Kirner gave but half an hour to each batch and worked like a mill-horse, he could hardly see any more than two-thirds of the prisoners in a week... The Catholic prisoners are not obliged to see the priest, and can, and sometimes do, refuse to see him. And if, on the other hand the priest were to omit his visit for fourteen days for any reason, this would consign his flock to the Protestant chaplain and terminate his leave; this is in the 5th Section of the Act... One of the visiting magistrates boldly avows that he is against giving any salary to a Catholic clergyman, however onerous his duties and unexceptionable his mode of discharging them, so long as the English Church continues as the Established Church in this land. Witout advancing our own opinions, this at any rate allows us to understand the very natural desire entertained by other sects to see it disestablished forthwith and for ever...'" [13]

The same newspaper then went on to deal with the case presented by Fr. Dominic Crescitelli during the inquiry.

"At Clerkenwell House of Correction we have a very odd state of things indeed. There is an average of about sixty prisoners... and Fr. Dominic Crescitelli attends about two hours daily, and on Sundays from 7,30 to 9,30. He is not allowed to hold a daily service but the Protestant chaplain is; hence the usual difficulty arises. The Catholic prisoners feel it a hardship to be locked up im their cells while the others go out for what is regarded as a relaxation... It is stated that the prisoners' will do anything for a change and to escape the monotony of their cells' and this feeling is very natural... Mr. Crescitelli, it appears, asked the magistrates to provide him with an altar; and it may be with unconscious irony that he stated. 'as the request was refused, he supposed they perhaps did not understand what an altar was'. Asking for a cupboard, which it seems they do understand, one was given to him in a kind of chest of drawers and on the summit of this chest of drawers the reverend gentleman is reduced to set forth his altar; and Mr. Pownall the visting justice is quite surprised that he is not therewith content. It seems scarcely credible that in order to celebrate a service on Sunday this clergyman was actually driven to offer as a propitiatory sacrifice to forego one week-day's instruction and that such an arrangement was accepted by the authorities. Mr. Pownall... would like to pay the Catholic chaplain, but objects to giving him an status or position

[13] Pall Mall Gazette 9.4.70.

How or why a person who is not recognized as an official should receive a salary is a question which he does not seem to have considered... However, as Mr. Glossop modestly admitted, 'The Middlesex magistrates do not necessarily represent public opinion generally,' and, considering all things, it would be a matter of regret if they did." [14]

Years were to pass before justice was done. Dr. Kirner was transferred to Ipswich and Fr. Crescitelli took on Coldbath Fields as well as the House of Correction. We learn something about his interest and dedication to this work from some letters which in 1875 he sent to the Press:

"Will you kindly permit me to say a few words in reference to our Catholic prisoners in Coldbath Fields and the House of Detention? For many years I have been Chaplain (unattached) to these two prisons and in the early period of my ministrations have had to encounter many difficulties owing to the suspicion with which I was regarded by the authorities. My difficulties, however, I am glad to say are beginning to disappear and I now have to acknowledge the uniform courtesy and respect of the prison authorities. In the house of Detention there is a floating average of sixty prisoners under my care and for these there is Holy Mass on Sundays, with instruction on Sundays and Thursdays, besides two other days allowed for private visits... In Coldbath Fields there are about three hundred prisoners under my charge and for these I have succeeded in establishing a library of the best Catholic books... The prisoners here can attend Mass every Sunday and there is also an afternoon service, with instructions given Sundays and Wednesdays, besides private visits. As the whole of these duties in the two prisons — in addition to the demands of a parish teeming with poor Italians and Irish fall upon me, your readers will perceive my time is pretty well occupied... Our chapel in Coldbath Fields, originally devoted to Protestant worship is light and airy, but that is the best that can be said of it, the altar and the few other fittings remain the same as when it came into our hands, the authorities being unwilling to grant a penny towards the expense of the Catholic service, not to speak of remuneration to the priest." [15]

Father Crescitelli then goes on to say that a harmonium would add considerably to the attractiveness of his services; that he has asked the prison commissioners to supply one, but they have refused; and that he now has permission to put one in at his own expense and his letter is really an appeal to the Catholic body to help him purchase one.

---

[14] Ib.
[15] Tablet 2.1.75.

How or why a person who is not recognized as an official should receive a salary is a question which he does not seem to have considered... However, as Mr. Glossop modestly admitted, 'The Middlesex magistrates do not necessarily represent public opinion generally,' and, considering all things, it would be a matter of regret if they did." [14]

Years were to pass before justice was done. Dr. Kirner was transferred to Ipswich and Fr. Crescitelli took on Coldbath Fields as well as the House of Correction. We learn something about his interest and dedication to this work from some letters which in 1875 he sent to the Press:

"Will you kindly permit me to say a few words in reference to our Catholic prisoners in Coldbath Fields and the House of Detention? For many years I have been Chaplain (unattached) to these two prisons and in the early period of my ministrations have had to encounter many difficulties owing to the suspicion with which I was regarded by the authorities. My difficulties, however, I am glad to say are beginning to disappear and I now have to acknowledge the uniform courtesy and respect of the prison authorities. In the house of Detention there is a floating average of sixty prisoners under my care and for these there is Holy Mass on Sundays, with instruction on Sundays and Thursdays, besides two other days allowed for private visits... In Coldbath Fields there are about three hundred prisoners under my charge and for these I have succeeded in establishing a library of the best Catholic books... The prisoners here can attend Mass every Sunday and there is also an afternoon service, with instructions given Sundays and Wednesdays, besides private visits. As the whole of these duties in the two prisons — in addition to the demands of a parish teeming with poor Italians and Irish fall upon me, your readers will perceive my time is pretty well occupied... Our chapel in Coldbath Fields, originally devoted to Protestant worship is light and airy, but that is the best that can be said of it, the altar and the few other fittings remain the same as when it came into our hands, the authorities being unwilling to grant a penny towards the expense of the Catholic service, not to speak of remuneration to the priest." [15]

Father Crescitelli then goes on to say that a harmonium would add considerably to the attractiveness of his services; that he has asked the prison commissioners to supply one, but they have refused; and that he now has permission to put one in at his own expense and his letter is really an appeal to the Catholic body to help him purchase one.

---

[14] Ib.
[15] Tablet 2.1.75.

Three weeks later he returns to the suject with another letter.

> "The (Catholic) prisoners are of many countries and of various languages, but the majority of them are of Irish extraction, and of the poorest class. Generally speaking their crimes are not of a serious character and their sentences are consequently short... They come regularly to their duty. Most of the prisoners are young and these are loudest in their complaints against their parents who neglected to send them to school and the church. The expiration of their sentence is but the beginning of trouble for many of them, Without friends, without means of livelihood, with the suspicion of the world clinging heavily around them, and starvation staring them in the face their freedom brings difficulties upon them that it requires little less than heroism to overcome; and few of us, I fancy, are heroes if all the truth were known. They come to me, ten or a dozen in the week, and it almost breaks my heart to send them away with that helpless piece of advice: 'to do the best they can.'"[16]

Father Crescitelli suggests that some sort of association should be created in order to help liberate prisoners.

> "I should like to see a fund established for the help of these prisoners on their liberation, and should think Catholics might do it. A work appealing more forcibly to all their charitable instincts it is not easy to imagine."

Father Crescitelli did succeed in establishing a fund in order to assist him in his work for prisoners. On February 16th, 1876 His Eminence Cardinal Manning paid a visit to the Coldbath Fields Prison and administered the Sacrament of Confirmation. The newspaper account closes with these words:

> "We may mention that the small fund raised to carry on the good work of making the conversion of these poor prisoners stable and lasting in its effects is nearly expended and therefore more money is required... to give a little pecuniary assistance to deserving prisoners when they leave the prison to start again in the world."[17]

Out of Father Crescitelli's efforts a society for assistance to discharged prisoners came into being, headed by Lord Petre, who was the sponsor of the Confirmation that day when Cardinal Manning visited Coldbath Fields. This organization, which was entitled "Society for the Relief of Discharged Catholic Prison-

---

[16] Ib. 23.1.75.
[17] Ib. 19.2.76.

ers" commenced in the spring of the year 1877, and as far as we know, was the first of its kind in England. It is interesting to observe that amongst the original subiscribers was Fr. Nenci, Rector of the Italian Church. [18].

At the time of Cardinal Manning's visit, Father Crescitelli was still described as Chaplain (unattached) of the prison. In the end, he was allotted a salary and the time came when a modest pension was granted, which he continued to enjoy till the end of his life.

Fr. Nenci, who succeeded Dr. Kirner as Rector of the Italian Church, completed and inaugurated the Italian Church school which his predecessor had commenced. This ceremony, was presided over by Archbishop Manning, on November 11th, 1872. These buildings cost L. 1500 and a large portion of this sum was provided by the Countess Tasker. The schools had a capacity for six hundred children. The operation of the school was financed by subscriptions, grants from the Catholic School Board, Government contributions and what was known as " the school penny ". But at the period of which we are writing, these sums were not sufficient and the priests had to make up the salaries of the teachers from their own scanty resources. We learn that almost three years later, the debt on the building was not yet paid off and that six hundred and fifty pounds were needed to pay it. A public dinner, according to the usages of the times, was held at the Alexandra Palace Hotel, the Cardinal-Archbishop presiding; guests were addressed by Monsignor Capel, the famous pulpit orator and lecturer. [19]

The building erected in 1872 exixsts no longer. Two years after the date of that dinner just mentioned ,the London County Council set about improving the congested and squalid district around Clerkenwell, and as a result many new streets were carved out of the slums; amongst them Clerkenwell Road. The Italian Church and its school buildings were involved.

> " Consequent on the street improvements now being effected by the Metropolitan Board of Works, the Italian Church is undergoing considerable alteration. The road in course of construction from Oxford Street to Shoreditch, cutting through Hatton Garden will abut on the southern side of the building and pass over the site where the school now stands. During the demolition of the schools and pending their rebuilding on adjacent ground, given by

---

[18] Ib. 19.7.77.
[19] Ib. 25.9.75.

the Board, the galleries of the church will be boarded up and the children instructed there. The alterations contemplated to the church will be rather extensive. The sacred edifice will be lengthened by nearly thirty feet and the altar removed to the east end, it being now at the west end. The principal entrance will be from the new street and at the point now occupied by the sanctuary. The whole interior is to be re-decorated and the incompleted parts, the spire, etc. will be finished." [20]

A little over a year afterwands, on November 8th, 1878, the new schools were inagurated: a three-storey building, with three departments, boys, girls and infants, with a capacity for six hundred children; its cost was four thousand pounds and it is substantially the St. Peter's schools of today. The boarded-off galleries which housed the school while the building was being erected, served for many years afterwards as an Italian School which was later housed in the school building proper.

The opening of Clerkenwell Road left our property with several sites between the church walls and the street which could be made to serve a useful purpose. On the 24th of March of the year 1879 the Fathers decided to erect some shops for rental on these sites and accordingly a sum of money was borrowed (£ 6000) on the security of the property and Fr. Kirner, who was recalled from Masio and appointed Rector, was commissioned with this task, which he carried out with great efficiency. During the course of these operations it was decided that a convent, suitable for the occupancy of a community of sisters, would be included in the programme and this decision was also implemented by Dr. Kirner.

During the seventies the character of the neighbourhood of Clerkenwell showed little change from the early days when our Fathers settled there. Indigence and its children, intemperance and crime, weighed heavy on the population and the priests were faced with the necessity of exercising a very primary apostolate.

"We regeret to hear that great distress exists in several districts of the Italian Church mission. It appears that this distress is so widespread and general that the clergy find their resources altogether inadequate to its relief. The districts of Bell Court, Lucy Buildings and George Street are steeped in the most shocking poverty and want, and the passer-by whose curiosity leads him in that direction is horrified at beholding the children half-naked and half-starved. The parents are costermongers and outdoor

---

[20] 29.2.77.

workers in general. Details many of which are too harrowing for publication, may be procured from Father Nenci of the Italian Church, to whom donations may be sent." [21]

The distress, it appears, was localized amongst the English-speaking residents, for the large Italian population for some reason or other could better fend for itself. Nevertheless, the Italians of London were not without their tribulations during this same period, for some of them were found to be engaging once more in the hateful pactice of importing young childrem from Italy and employing them to beg on the streets.

"Everyone who lives in London must have noticed from time to time small groups of Italian children who make a pretence to play upon some instrument or who possibly turn the handle of an organ. These children usually excite some compassion, from the fact they are sojourners in a foreign land and also from a certain mystery as to their story or mode of living, which makes them interesting to the lovers of romance. Their real story, when told in naked truth, is less romantic than shameless and horrible. They, poor children, may be innocent enough; but their masters or the speculator who employs them, is usually a tyrant and a thief. The story of these children is as follows. Persons known as Padroni, acting generally two together, and working in Italy and in England, obtain the children from their parents in Neapolitan districts — the least civilized of the Italian kingdom. They enter into a verbal contract with the parents to pay a sum for the services of the children, to feed and clothe them during a period of two years and to teach them to play an instrument. They then bring the children through France, making them work all the way to save expense; and obliging them to sing or to dance during their marches so as to earn their scant means of subsistence. Sheer exhaustion often kills these poor children. If they survive till they reach England they are first brought to London, where they are placed in disgracefully poor depots and are afterwards distributed throughout the country in groups, under experienced members of the fraternity. Their advocations while in England are well known; they sing at the doors of public houses, or pretend to play on some bad Italian instrument, or beg off the passers-by in the streets. But in private their existence is terrible... Their masters beat them if they do not bring home sufficient earnings and half starve them whether they do or not. They are huddled in rooms quite unfit for habitation and taught much that they ought not to know. They are seldom taken back to their parents at the end of the stipulated time, but are abandoned by their cruel employers and unless they are rescued by the police or by friends their fate may be easily imagined." [22]

---

[21] Ib. 4.4.74.
[22] Ib. 31.7.77.

The Italian colony in London supported a Benevolent Society at this time, one of its most active members being Dr. Pius Melia, whose connection with the Italian Church we have detailed above. This Society, assisted by the Italian Consulate, rescued and sent back to Italy many of these poor children, but it could not reach them all, and the cooperation of the British authorities was indispensible. The matter became so serious that the Secretary of State in 1877, enlisted the aid of the Lord Mayor of London in the following terms:

> "The attention of the Secretary of State has been called to the practice under which children, bought or stolen from their parents in Italy or elsewhere, are imported into this country by persons known by the name of Padroni, who send them out into the streets to earn money by playing musical instruments, selling images, begging or otherwise. It is most important to suppress this traffic by every available means and the cooperation of the police is necessary for this purpose" [23]

The Secretary of State then goes on to point out that the padroni should be prosecuted and the children placed in industrial schools, or workhouses, till such time as they can be restored to their parents.

The priests at the Italian church took an active part in the gradual suppression of this infamous trade and in identifying and placing the unfortunate children in temporary homes. Particularly energetic and efficient in this task was Dr. Kirner, after his return from Masio. It was in consideration of his skill in these matters that in April 1881 he was elected to the Board of Guardians of the Poor of Clerkenwell, a fairly unusual appointment for a priest and for a foreigner at that day.

The troubles of the clergy of the Italian church did not end here. Once before, unfavourable publicity bestowed on the Italian community in London had been accompanied by determined efforts to proselytize the Italian poor; now it happened again. A barrister named Henry Bellingham, resident in Lincoln's Inn Fields, addressed a letter to the Tablet in which he sounds the alarm:

> "I beg to inform you of a specious attempt at proselytism in the district of St. Peters's Italian Church. Within the past year a socalled mission to the Italian Catholics has been inaugurated by a certain Dr. Passalenti, who is announced to have been formerly 'a priest of the Church of Rome'. This gentleman is put

---

[23] Ib. 11.8.77.

forward by a body of rich and influential Protestants, who generally confine their attempts at 'conversion' to the poorest of the poor and in this particular instance are, as usual, dealing largely in their favourite commodity; 'Soup'. In addition to the food that is administered by a committee, clothes are freely distributed. Service is conducted in a Protestant church, and schools are in course of construction..." [24]

The wolves who had descended on the flock were not so easily put to flight, as appears from another correspondent, writing two years later to the same newpaper. This was a Mr. F.A. Lumbye, who said as follows:

"In the large Italian colony near Hatton Garden a conventicle and schools have been in active operation for some time past, conducted by an Italian apostate, who holds a licence from the Protestant Bishop of London, and is supported by an influential committee of ladies and gentlemen; they have expended considerable sums in providing food, clothing and various entertainments in order to attract the Italians, more especially the children, and to induce them to apostatize from their faith. The services of that well known paper the 'Graphic' have likewise been secured and besides an appeal to the general public for further funds, an illustration is published in that journal of an entertainment and tea party given by the ladies of the committee and attended by the Protestant clergy of the district and other gentlemen. I regret to say that a few Italians through poverty have yieded to these temptations; and although the Fathers of the Italian Church have laboured hard to counteract these devices, their means are so limited that they are unable to do so successfully. I therefore appeal to you readers... Donations of money and clothing will be thankfully received by the Very Reverend Aemilianus Kirner, Rector of the Italian Church. I would also appeal to Catholic ladies resident in London who possess a knowledge of the Italian language, to form themselves into a committee to visit the Italian poor; they would by doing so render most valuable assistance to the clergy..." [25]

A month later Mr. Lumbye published another letter in the same newspaper, in which he states that his appeal to the public has been successful and that the Fathers are now in a position to counteract the false propaganda. We will quote one sentence from his letter, which throws a light on the activities of our priests at this time.

'In addition to the large English day schools conducted under Government inspection, which are attended by many Italian

---

[24] Ib. 1.3.79.
[25] Ib. 22.1.81.

children, and the night schools especially for the Italians, the services of an Italian master have been secured in order that instruction may be given in their own language to the Italian children who attend the day schools. »[26]

Our story has shown that Pius IX was deeply interested in the foundation and progress of the Italian Church in London. We have mentioned the various works of art which he gave to Fr. Melia for the church and which are to be found in it to the present day. The same Pope presented to the church a splendid gold chalice in the year 1872, the presentation being made by Mgr. Nardi, an Auditor of the Roman Rota who was in England on business, on August 11th, 1872.

The relationship of the church to the Royal Family of Italy is somewhat more complicated. Earlier on in our story we have noted that the official Italian Chaplain attached to the Sardinian Chaplain enjoyed a salary which was paid by the House of Savoy from Turin, as part of the ambassadorial budget. On the First Sunday of Advent, 1855, King Victor Emmanuel paid a state visit to the Sardinian chapel and it fell to Dr. Faa to receive him at the door with the liturgical honors. But very soon after his return to Italy, the King began putting into effect the policy which was ultimately to lead him, a Catholic King into the invasion of the papal States and the usurpation of Rome. Not long after this royal visit to London, the clergy of the Sardinian Chapel obiected to singing the Collect for the King after Solemn Mass, on the grounds that this monarch had placed himself outside the Catholic Church by his deeds. As a retaliation, the salary was withdrawn from the Sardinian Chapel and for a while, we understand, it was paid to our priests who by this time no longer lived at the Chapel. Finally, in the year 1858 the Sardinian Ambassador in London was notified that no salary would be available any longer for the Ambassador's Chaplain.

The Italian monarchy, in spite of its notorious anticlericalism and its persecutory policy, did not then, or afterwanrds, break formally with the Church. When Prince Humbert, later king, visited London in 1865, he attended High Mass, in state, at the Italian Church and gave a munificent donation to the church funds.

---

[26] Ib. 22.2.81.

King Victor Emmanuel died in Rome at the beginning of 1878, without any public reconciliation between him and the Holy Father, though the last Sacraments were administered to him on his deathbed. His remains were buried in a church. But his partisans in Rome used the occasion of his death and funeral to provoke unpleasant incidents with the Church, for the prevalent mood of the unifiers of Italy was at that time Garibaldian and it was patrotic to be anti-clerical. The Holy See, which had been unjustly deprived of its ancient patrimony by these unifiers, was naturally sensitive to all such manifestations and was not prepared to allow Catholic ceremonies to be used as a pretext for insulting the Catholic Church. The question of funeral services for the dead King arose all over Italy, and found different solutions in different places. It cropped up in London too, but Cardinal Manning nipped it in the bud. The whole story is told in The Tablet:

> " Certain of our London daily contemporaries have thought fit to make an unjustifiable attack on His Eminence Cardinal Manning. The text was the supposed refusal of 'public prayers' for the repose of the soul of the late King Victor Emmanuel and the charge founded on it was one of intolerance and 'ultramontane vengeance'. Italian residents in London 'irrespective of creed', using the Italian Consul-General, Baron Heath, as their mouthpiece, applied to the clergy of the Italian Church, Hatton Garden, for the celebration in that church of a Solemn Mass of Requiem on Friday the 18th of January. That day was a Greater Double, the feast of St. Peter's Chair in Rome — not a very appropriate day, by the way — and it was necessary to send to the Cardinal Archbishop for permission to celebrate a Solemn Mass for the Dead. His Eminence, probably desiring to avoid the conversion of a religious act into an anti-Papal demonstration, replied that he would not permit the celebration of a High Mass of Requiem but that all the low masses on a fixed day might be offered for the late King... But this did not meet the real wishes of the petitioners, as what some of them wanted seems to have been rather a service 'in honour of the deceased King', than a service for the repose of his soul... However, Dr. Pius Melia, attached to the Italian Church, who is also Almoner of the Italian Benevolent Society, believing, as is alleged, that the decision had been misunderstood or had created a bad impression, appears to have telegraphed to the Cardinal, begging his Eminence to withdraw his refusal. His Eminence did so and the permission arrived through the Nunciature in Paris on Friday morning, the very day on which the letters of complaint had appeared on the papers and was immediately communicated to the Italian Ambassador. It was however accompanied by a condition — 'provided that the ecclesiastical ceremony had not the character of a political demonstration'. And on this ground

the Ambassador declined to accept it. In a comunication sent by the Embassy to the newspapers it is stated that ' the Italian Ambassador could only perceive in that conditional permission a hidden refusal from Cardinal Manning for the celebration of the Mass in memory of King Victor Emanuel, because such a religious ceremony could not be divested of its political character, as the Embassy and the diplomatic body were to be present; besides being a last token of respect given by the Italians resident in London to the memory of the first King of Italy.' From which we are tempted to infer that the gentlemen who decided not to accept this 'conditional permission' preferred their grievance to their religious ceremony, for nobody can seriously believe that when the Cardinal prohibited a 'political demonstration', he meant that the *Embassy and the diplomatic body were not to be present or that the 'religious ceremony' was to be deprived 'of its political character'* to that extent."

A month later Victor Emmanuel was followed to the grave by Pius IX and a Solemn Dirge was wholeheartedly sung by the Italians and other Catholics of the district at the Italian Church, and this time no one thought of turning the prayers of the dead Pope's faithful and sorrowing children into a political demonstration for anything at all.

The Catholic Poles in London — like the Germans — established for themselves a church in that city, where they might hear the word of God and go to confession in their own language. For many years the church was situated in Gower Street, but there came a time when this place could be used no longer, and the Poles applied to hold their services in the crypt of the Italian Church — a reasonable request, for Dr. Faa di Bruno had spent much time collecting money in Poland for the building of that same crypt. The permission was of course granted. Cardinal Manning himself came to the opening ceremony, which took place on the 15th of August of the year 1878, and the weekly services were held for several years. It was the Chaplain of the Poles, a certain Father Bakanowski, a member of the Congregation of the Resurrection, who was celebrating High Mass at the high altar during the Epiphany celebrations when a curious incident took place, whose various repercussion has influenced the history of the Pallottines in England. The account of this happening is thus given by The Tablet of January 17th, 1880.

---

[27] Ib. 26.1.78.

'On Saturday, Jan 10th, the Church of St. Peter's, Hatton Garden, known as the Italian Church, was the scene of a shocking outrage. The ten o'clock Mass was being celebrated by the Rev. James Bakanowski, a Polish priest, Chaplain to the Poles in London. Just he began the 'Credo' a shot was fired at him by a person in the body of the Church, and the bullet lodged in the altar. The server immediately fled into the Sacristy and locked the door behind him, so that the priest, in following was unable to enter. Here his assailant fired two more shots, one of which, through the priest fortunately stooping, became embedded in the crown of the arch over the sacristy door, and the other in the side of the door. The priest then sought refuge by going behind the altar, where he was followed by the would-be murderer. The Rev. Father succeeded in getting round to the front of the high altar and made his escape. Two more shots were fired after him, one of them piercing the back of a chair at the top of the north aisle of the church. The man rushed to the back of the altar, and seeing some of the massive candlesticks, dashed them to the ground, breaking them into fragments. He then went up the altar steps and wrenched away the door and framework of the tabernacle. The force required to do this may be imagined when it is stated that the door itself is a plate of metal of considerable thickness. The screws which fasten the door he snapped like matchwood, and then seized a pyx and chalice, which he threw down and bent and damaged as much as he could. Not content with this he brought out the ciborium, which contained about 300 consecrated hosts.

The altar linen and handsome antependium were ignited either by the falling candles, which he tore from the altar, or by the man setting fire to them with matches, a supply of which was afterwads found in his possession. The antenpendium was a beautiful work of art, being worth at least £ 150. It was the gift of the noble ladies of Genoa, being the work of their own hands, and was presented to the church on the 8th of December last, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. Fortunately, the antependium was covered by another of less value, which had been some time in use in the church. The outer one was to all intents and purposes destroyed and the under one was scorched and blackened by the flames. The debris of the broken glass, candles, metal and woodwork was scattered all over the chancel. The incidents thus described were the work of a few moments. The congregation at first were struck with panic at the audacity of the attack, but quickly recovering from it, the housekeeper quickly extinguished the flames, and some members of the congregation surrounding the man, removed from his person the revolver and dagger which he had on him. He was shortly after taken to the Clerkenwell Police Court.

Another report states that about half past ten, when not more than 20 persons were in the church, and Father Bakanowski was officiating at the high altar, Schloss came into the building and, without taking off his hat, said to the congregation, 'You go away'

and then, walking up the middle steps to the altar rails, presented a pistol and fired at the officiating priest, who, being alarmed, ran towards the sacristy door, followed by the would be assassin, who fired again. Fortunately Father Bakanowski escaped without personal injury, but was very much alarmed. The miscreant, who was running towards the sacristy, was met by the Rev. H.V. Arkell, P. S. M. a priest of the same church, who, having heard several shots fired, was coming into the church to see the cause of a violent ringing of the bells. F. Arkell was also fired at. Schloss went to the back of the altar and threw down therefrom a candlestick, and proceeded to otherwise damage the altar furniture, smashing a considerable quantity. He broke the chalices, took the Blessed Sacrament from the tabernacle, and threw the sacred particles on the ground. When he left the sanctuary he came direct to Father Arkell in the nave, who, when within reach, seized hold of both arms of the assailant and took from him a fivechambered revolver. Notwithstanding the efforts of Schloss to stab the priest in the chest with a large stileto knife, by the aid of the housekeeper (Elizabeth Brooks) the desperado was secured; but not without having cut Brooks a good deal about the hands. The assistance of the police having been secured by some of the congregation, they, with the help of some one in the crowd which had by this time collected in the church, took the dagger from the man, who made attempts to stab them about him. The result of his destructive attack on the altar and the furniture thereon was to cause the light of the candles to set fire to some of the surrounding ornamentation, and it is estimated that altogether some hundred and fifty or two hundred of pounds loss will be sustained."

On being placed, in the dock at Clerkenwell Schloss, who gave his age as 35, said he was an asphalt worker, residing at 37, Great Saffron Hill, a Swiss by birth. He was charged with attempting to assassinate the Rev. Adelphus Bakanowski and Henry V. Arkell, P.S.M., with a loaded revolver, inside the Italian Church, Hatton Garden; and further with setting fire to the church.

The prisoner who treated the matter with the greatest indifference, said he had no questions to ask, for he did not properly understand what had been said against him.

It was stated in Court that the prisoner had come from the United States to England and had taken up residence in Saffron Hill at No. 37 — which, like most of the houses in that neighbourhood, was occupied by members of the Italian colony which stretches from Holborn close to Farringdon Road to Hatton Wall close by Leather Lane. He turned his hands to many pursuits, and was for some time a vendor of street ices. It appeared that he had been a very short time engaged in asphalt

working — a business almost monopolised by Belgians. He was described in the neighbourhood as being of an uncommunicative, morose disposition — one who did not mix freely with his countrymen; for, although he stated at one time he was a German, and at another a Swiss, it was ascertained, beyond doubt, that he was really a Milanese. It was also stated that a few years earlier shortly after Schoss arrived in the United States from Milan, the life of a Catholic priest who was officiating in an American church was attempted in a manner similar to that in which the life of the Polish priest was attempted in London. It was discovered that the revolver was purchased the day before the attempted assassination. Schloss was a powerfully built, though under-sized man and Father Arkell, who courageously arrested his course of destruction by seizing his arms, was slenderly built. Schoss was not illiterate, as at the police station he signed his name in good handwriting.

The news of this happening, and in particular the outrage against the Blessed Sacrament, sent a thrill of horror and indignation amongst all Catholics.

In the London area the Cardinal Archbishop ordered that on the last Sunday in January Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament should be made in every church in the archdiocese and general communions carried out . Using his apostolic faculties he also granted a plenary indulgence to anyone taking part in these acts of reparation. When the Holy Father came to hear about the outrage, he sent the following message to Fr. Nenci, at the time Rector of the Church:

> "His Holiness Leo XIII, in bewailing the horrible sacrilege which has recently been committed in the venerable church of the Fathers of the Pious Society of Missions in London, presents a beautifully wrought pyx to them as an act of public reparation for the said sacrilegious outrage; being assured that this sacred offering, as coming from the hands of the Supreme Pontiff, as well as for the motive for which His Holiness bestows it, will prove, now and for the time to come, a great incentive to the Catholics of England to unite together in manifesting their piety and devotion."

On February 11the sacrilegious arsonist Schlosse was arraigned before the Central Criminal Court, before Mr. Justice Hawkins, and condemned to life imprisonment, an earlier senttence of manslaughter being taken into account.

Amongst the interested readers of the newspaper accounts of the crime was Mr. Coventry Patmore, the famous convert-poet. Mr. Patmore much admired the presence of mind and the calm courage shown by Fr. Arkell, on whom he called at the Italian Church. The visit developed into a friendship, in the course of which Mr. Patmore made known to Fr. Arkell his wish to erect a Catholic Church in the town of Hastings, where he was living at the time, and mentioned his desire that the Fathers of the Italian Church should take charge of it.

CHAPTER V

Before going on to the details of the foundation of the Hastings house, we shall deal with two activities of the Fathers of the London house: their literary productions and the celebrations of the Octave of the Epiphany, which commenced after the church was opened in 1863.

The first publication made by any of our Fathers in England (and the earliest of all the periodical publications ever made in our Society) was a Calendar put out by Dr. Raphael Melia at the end of the year 1846. Its title was the following:

> Direttorio/ per l'anno 1847/ ad uso degli Italiani dimoranti a Londra/Feste di obblige/Feste di divozione/Giorni di astinenza/ Indulgenze.

A copy is extant in the General Archives in Rome [1]. It may be that the Calendar was printed again the following year, for Melia, in forwarding a copy to his friend Dr. Gentili, the Rosminian misionary in England, refers to some mistakes in the text and says that they will be corrected in the next year. We find an alluusion to a *Calendario Cattolico Romano* published in London in 1850, in the Neapolitan newspaper *Il Tempo* no. 294, of the same year, which perhaps may refer to a later edition of Fr. Melia's effort.

Many years later, in 1879 and 1881 we find a mention, in the distribution of tasks at the Italian church, of the preparation of an Almanach for the years subsequent to those we have noted. How long this Almanach lasted, or whether it was in any sense continuous with the Calender published by Fr. Melia, we have no means of knowing.

The next work is a 22 pp. pamphlet, printed at Naples in 1850, in the Italian language, written by Fr. Raphael Melia, though it does not bear his name on the title-page, but only

---

[1] Arch. Gen. Busta It. Ch. Stampati.

his initials at the end of the work. Its title-page is as follows:

Stato Infelice/della/Missione Italiana in Londra/Sua influenza sull'Italia/e/Soccorse che da questa si aspetta/Napoli 1850.

The work was originally published in a Neapolitan review: Raccolta Religiosa La Scienza e la Fede, Vol. XX, Fasc. 119, and as its title indicates, its object was to drum up subscriptions for the Italian Church.

In the year 1853 Fr. Raphael Melia published a pamphlet in English (22 pp.) which bore the title:

St. Peter's Church, Rectory and Schools/for/Italians/and Catholics of all Nations/London/1853.

This work is unsigned but from contemporary correspondence it is quite clear that Melia is the author. It is accompanied by a folded sheet in which an artist has projected the interior of the future church; there is also a ground-floor plan of the edifice.

In 1857 Dr. Faa di Bruno published an 8-page pamphlet, of the "Tract" variety whose particulars are as follows:

"Exposition of the Catholic Faith/" title on the front page. On the back page the following appears: Joseph Faa di Bruno; St. Gregory the Great, March 12, 1857/51 Lincoln's Inn Fields/ Sold by Mrs. Little, 34 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden/ one farthing each/. It is a commentary on the Creed of Pius IV.

In 1865 Fr. Raphael Melia published an important theological work on the Sacrament of Penance, whose particulars are these:

A Treatise/on/Auricular Confession/Dogmatical, Historical and Practical/by the Rev. Raphael Melia DD/Missionary Apostolic of the Pious Society of Missions founded by the Servant/Of God Vincent Pallotti/Dublin, James Duffy 15 Wellington Quay/ and/ Paternoster Row, London/1865. Introduction XIV and 261 pp. text. This work was translated into Italian (by the author, one presumes); the first Italian edition being published by Monaldi, in Rome, in 1837. As far as we are aware there have five Italian editions, the last bearing the date 1898. We have referred, earlier on, to the controversy which took place between Dr. Faa di Bruno and the Anglican Vicar of Clerkenwell, Mr. Maguire in the year 1868.

In its course Dr. Faa di Bruno published a four-page pamphlet (unsigned) whose particulars are the following:

Maguire/And his Lectures on the/Martyrs of Smithfield/ sold by Miss Price/59 Hatton Garden E.C./

The same year, 1868, Fr. Raphael Melia published his monumental work on the Blessed Virgin:

The Woman Blessed by all Generations/or/Mary/The object of veneration, confidence and/Imitation to all Christians/by/ The Rev. Raphael Melia DD/PSM/London/Longmans, Green and Co. 1868. XVI and 454 pp. Text.

Three years later the same writer produced the last of his published works: his biography of Our Founder, which is of unique importance, for he was the earliest of Pallotti's disciples. Its particulars are:

The Life/of the Servant of God/Vincent Pallotti/of Rome/Founder of The Pious Society of Missions/Extracted from the Process of his Beatification/by/Raphael Melia DD/Priest of the above Society and Missionary Apostolic/Delicated to His Grace the/Archbishop of Westminster/With letters from His Grace the/ Archbishop of Westminster/His Grace the Archbishop of Baltimore and His/Grace the Apostolic Delegate of Scotland/London/Burns and Oates and Co/17 & 18 Portman Street & 62 Paternoster Row/Also to be had from the Sacristan of St. Peter's Italian Church/ Hatton Wall/Hatton Garden/1871. XV and 267 pp. text.

The next year, 1872, Dr. Faa di Bruno published an 8000-word pamphlet or tract, on the subject of Faith, whose text we have been unable to see. It was written while he stayed at Kirtling Tower and from his correspondence we learn that the printing, which was done by Longman's, required a sum of £60, which he paid before the work commenced. The proofs were corrected by Fr. Crescitelli, as we learn from a letter from this father to Dr. Faa [8]

A work which was to earn enduring fame for Dr. Faa, and to secure the salvation of innumerable souls was his manual for prospective converts: Catholic Belief, which was published in 1875. Here are the particulars:

Catholic Belief/or a/ short and simple/Exposition/of Catholic Doctrine/by the/Very Reverend J. Faa di Bruno DD/ Rector General of the Pious Society of Missions/Smo. Salvatore in Onda, Rome/and St. Peter's Italian Church/Hatton Wall, London E.C./Price sixpence/or five shillings a dozen post free/

---

[2] Irish Prov. Arch. Ipswich Papers.

Burns, Oates & Co., 17 Portman Street London/and of all Catholic Booksellers/1875. The preface is dated on the Feast of St. Michael and all Angels, 1875, from St. Peter's Italian Church, London, 320 pp. Text.

The book was an immediate success. The author himself revised the work for further editions in 1878, 1882, 1883 and 1884. It was taken up by Benziger Bros. for publication in New York. By 1887, when the first Italian edition appeared, it was estimated that over half a million copies had already been sold in English. Edition after edition, reprint after reprint were called for.

The first American edition appeared in 1884, with a Preface by Bishop Ryan of Buffalo, who refers to the author in these words: "Dr. Faa di Bruno evinces much ability and tact in setting forth Catholic principles in few words with winning simplicity and yet scholastic accuracy. He is indeed a true son of the venerable and saintly Vincent Pallotti, full of Catholic, love for his fellowmen and burning with holy zeal for souls." The last American edition which we have seen (1922) carries the statement that five hundred and fifty thousand copies have been sold. An English edition of the same year states that it is the 32nd. It is probably an understatement. to say that two million copies of "Catholic Belief" have been printed and distributed. The most recent English edition appeared in 1948, brought up to date and revised by Rev. Dr. Joseph Cartmell, of Upholland College, Liverpool.

Dr. Faa di Bruno's intention was to produce not only a simple and serviceable manual, but an inexpensive one as well, and this meant that the author's share was a very small one indeed. For each edition during his lifetime he received the sum of ten pounds and a few dozen presentation copies; an arrangement which was continued by his successors till, about 1910, the copyright was sold by Fr. Bannin.

From Dr. Faa di Bruno's correspondence it appears that German, French and Portuguese translations were arranged for, but we are unable to say if any of these appeared in print.

The fifth edition of "Catholic Belief" carried a Preface by Cardinal Manning, in which the Prelate expressed his thanks to Dr. Faa for "one of the most complete and useful manuals of Doctrine, Devotion and Elementary information for those who are seeking the truth." There was at this time an ultra-Protestant writer by name Charles H. Collette, given to con-

troversial lectures and pamphlets, whose tactics for drawing attention to himself were simple: aim your attack as high as you can. This person Collette wanted to get a blow in at "Catholic Belief" and he considered that punch could be added to the effort if Cardinal Mannig was put into the target. He therefore produced a 120-page work, entitled "Letters addressed to Cardinal Manning on his approval of 'Catholic Belief' by J. Faa di Bruno." Manning's reaction was succint. His Eminence's Secretary wrote to the author in this fashion: "His Eminence's desires me to say that he has no time to bestow on idle controversy and His Eminence counsels you to spend the last days of your long life in making ready for a better."

Dr. Faa di Bruno's last work is a translation into Italian of a little devotional work by his friend, Dr. Daniel Gilbert, DD, Vicar-General of Westminster. It was published in 1885 in Turin and its title-page is a follows:

La Manna del tabernacolo/ossia/Visite a Gesù Sacramentato/del/Rev. Mons. Daniele Gilbert DD/Vic. Grale. dell'archidiocesi di Westminster-Londra/Traduzione del M. R. Giuseppe Faa di Bruno Rettore Gen. della Pia Società delle Missioni/ Torino 1885/Tip. B. Canonica e figli Eredi Binelli. It contains II and 268 pp. text, and is dated from "Collegio di Missioni Estere S. Patrizio, Masio Piemonte," January lst ,1885.

The bibliographical production of our early Fathers in London includes the writings of Fr. Bernard Feeney ,a secular priest from the Irish Diocese of Elphin, where he was a professor for some years in the Summerhill College and later became curate of St. Peter's Church, Athlone. From there he went to London, with the intention of joining our Society, which he did in the latter half of 1881. While he was a member of the community of the Italian Church, London, he wrote his first book, "Lessons from the Passion." The work comprises seven meditations; its description is this:

Lessons from the Passion/by the Reverend Bernard Feeney /Priest of the Pious Society of Missions/St. Peter's Italian Church, London/James Duffy and Sons/1883.

It was a popular work, and ran through three editions, the last of them in 1903.

Two years later Fr. Feeney published another work, whose title is:

Home duties/and/Home difficulties/by/Rev. Bernard Feeney /Priest of the Pious Society of Missions/With Preface/by/ His

Eminence Cardinal Manning/London/James Duffy & Sons, 1 Paternoster Row/and 18 Wellington Quay/Dublin/1885. VIII and 264 pp. text.

We will deal with Fr. Feeney's Argentine's publications when we come to the history of our Argentine foundation. Continuing the record of the publications made by the London Fathers of our Society, we will mention a book of sermons and addresses, published by Fr. Henry Arkell PSM while he was Rector of Hastings, that is, in the eighties. We once examined a copy of this work, but have been unable to repeat the experience, for it has disappeared from the library in which it was stored.

From his post as Rector of San Silvestro in Capite, Father William Whitmee produced several important works. Chronologically first on the list is the weekly newspaper entitled "The Roman Post."

The Roman Post/A weekly Catholic Newspaper/published in Rome/No. 1, Rome, May 1895, Price twenty centimes, two pence, four cents./ 8 pages per issue. The last number we have seen appeared on the 16th of May, 1896. The preceding issue, i,e., May 9th, 1894, carried the following statement:

> "Owing to the strain of his other work, the Very Rev. William Whitmee PSM has been obliged to withdraw from the Editorship of the Roman Post, though he continues to regard it with favour and sympathy." [3]

The first Editor of the Roman Post was a Father Venturini, a Chaplain to the British forces in India for many years. From a note in the issue of July 6th, 1895, it appears that Fr. Whitmee himself assumed the direction from thenceforward. The newspaper was profusely illustrated with pictures of the notable ecclesiastics of the period and engravings of the Roman scene. In its news columns it gave a fairly full coverage of the Vatican news of the time and its social reporting provides a picture of the comings and goings of the important visitors to Rome. Articles on the English-speaking Colleges, archeological and religious topics filld up the space left after the copious advertisements. Some of these articles, particularly a group of them which deal with the history of the Church of San Silvestro in Capite and with the controversies about An-

---

[3] S. Silv. Arch.

glican Orders and Curch Unity, possess, one would say, permanent interest. The articles on Anglicanism were signed with the initials W.J.D.C., which conceal the name of William J. D. Croke. They were translated into Italian and published by the Osservatore Romano of the time. Also worthy of note is a series of historical articles on "The English Palace in Rome" — the ancient palace which Henry VII of England set aside as the English residence in Rome for his envoys. They were written by the famous Irish historian William Maziere Brady. The first few numbers of "The Roman Post" carry the statement that the circulation was five thousand.

In the year 1896 Fr. Whitmee produced another important work, viz. his Guide to Lent and Holy Week in Rome. Here is its description:

Lent/and/Holy Week/in/Rome with the Lenten Stations /Visit to the Seven Churches/and to the Scala Sancta/Together with/a copious glossary/compiled/by the Rev. William Whitmee PSM/Rector of the Ven. Church of St. Silvestro in Capite, Rome/Tipografia Valentina/Via dei Serpenti 87-88/1896. XV and 632 pp. text. With a frontispiece in colour of Our Lady Hope of England, venerated in the Church of St. Silvestro in Capite (now in the Sacristy). The Glossary, which occupies more than sixty pages of the text, is a simple, plain and accurate explanation of Catholic terms most in usage, such as Abstinence, Halo, Loretto, Nun, etc. It is a model of its kind, and, brought up to date, would be well worth reprinting.

In January 1898 Fr. Whitmee brought out the most useful of all his works: the well-known Annuario Ecclesiastico, or Ecclesiastical Directory, whose particulars are the following:

1898/Annuario Ecclesiastico/Roma/S. Silvestro in Capite/ Piazza S. Silvestro. The introductory Note bears the date, January lst, 1898. This edition comprises 870 pp. of text. An idea of the magnitude of the work may be obtained from this description of it, which appeared in The Tablet

"The Annuario Ecclesiastico has been issued from the church of San Silvestro in Capite. It is in Latin and Italian; the main part of the text being in the latter language. Consisting of 870 pages of closely printed and relevant matter, it may be expected to supersede all the compilations of the kind which it has outrivalled. The first part deals with the Sovereign Pontiff, the Ecclesiastical Dignitaries, the Religious Orders, the Diplomatic Corps and the Pontifical Family. It consists of 104 pages. The second part deals with the Holy See, the suburban Sees, the archdioceses and

dioceses, the abbeys and prelatures nullius and the ecclesiastical organization of the Catholic world. It covers from page 104 to page 646. The third part is a chronology and list of the Roman Pontiffs. The fourth part is a copious ecclesiastical calendar, extending from page 661 to 747. The fifth part is given to a summary of the Pontifical audiences held from December 1896 to the end of 1897. The sixth part devotes from page 777 to 805 to the Encyclicals and Letters of His Holiness. The seventh part is concerned with History, Art and Archeology. The eighth part is explanatory in regard to Consistories, Diplomatic Nominations, Promotions, Elections, titles of Nobility, Equestrian Orders and Decorations, Missions and Necrology. The work which is well illustrated is well prepared, not less in respect of letterpress, than of compilation, and deserves success. The compiler, Fr. Whitmee, says he will be glad to receive any correction which will be communicated to him." [4]

The next year's edition increased its pages to 941. The edition of 1900 has the text of a letter from Cardinal Rampolla, Secretary of State, conveying the thanks of His Holiness for a gift copy and bestowing his blessing upon the staff of the Annuario and the Society.

The 1911 edition contains a Blessing conferred on the compilers by His Holiness St. Pius X, and a recommendation from the Vicariate of Rome to all parish priests, Rectors of churches and religious to co-operate with the Pallottine Fathers by supplying them with material for the Annuario.

The last edition of this great work to appear bears the date 1915 and consists of 962 pages, and it contains a new and valuable feature: a list of the parishes of all Italy.

After the entry of Italy into the first World War, publication was interrupted. Our fathers were preparing to resume publication when the war was over, but it was represented to them that the Annuario Pontificio intended to take over the same field as had formerly been covered by the Annuario Ecclesiastice; consequently, our Fathers desisted from their purpose, and Fr. Whitmee's great compilation disappeared.

Fr. Whitmee's next work is a description of the Conclave, written in the Italian language.

Il Conclave/Descritto da un sacerdote/della Pia Società delle/Missioni (Pallottini)/Roma 1903/Tipografia Tata Giovanni/Prezzo due lire. 156 pp. Text.

---

[4] Tablet 22.1.98.

It is a learned work, written in simple style, containing, as an appendix, the Apostolic Constitutions of Pius IX regarding Conclaves.

We gather from a hagiographical work published by a prelate who for many years was an external chaplain of the church of San Silvestro that Fr. Whitmee also composed a work on the history of this church, which bore the title: *Guglielmo Whitmee. Appunti di storia per la chiesa di San Silvestro in Capite.* We have, unfortunately been unable so far to find a copy of this production. [5]

Before concluding with the subject of Fr. Whitmee's publications, we may also recall that Lady Herbert's Biography of our Blessed Founder, which was published in 1894, was composed by this lady at the request of Father Whitmee, whom she had come to know during her frequent visits to the city of Rome. Lady Herbert of Lea, who was a convert to Catholicity, belonged to a famous English family and was born in 1822. In 1867 she joined the Catholic Church and thereafter her pen, her fortune and her time were placed unreservedly at the service of religion. She was a great author of lives of Saints and holy persons and her biography of our Founder is one of a series of works of the same sort. The life is preceeded by a preface from Cardinal Vaughan, with whom she was closely associated for many years in the development of the St. Joseph's Mill Hill Society and she is buried — her death took place in 1911 — near the Cardinal's resting-place in the Mill Hill College.

We will now return to the story of the Italian Church, and specifically to the annual celebrations of the Octave of the Epiphany conducted there. All members of the Pallottine Community are acquainted with the great celebration which our Society annually conducts in Rome; a celebration which commenced in the year following the foundation of the Society. Our Founder attached great store to it and the significance of our Society as a religious body is bound up with it. The Epiphany Octave, which is carried out in Rome today exactly as in the days of Vincent Pallotti is at once a popular mission and a dramatic presentation of the unity and universality of the Church, underlying the diversity of rites and languages in which the Gospel is preached to all men.

---

[5] Il Corpo di S. Silvestro Papa, per Mon. Oliverio Iozzi, Roma 1915, p. 7. n.

The original conception of St. Peter's Church, Hatton Garden, was that besides catering for the Italian population of London, it was to be "the church of all nations." It was fitted therefore, to serve as a theatre for just such a celebration as our Founder established in Rome and consequently our early Fathers in London, soon after the church was opened, proceeded to imitate his example. As far as we know, the first Epiphany Octave at St. Peter's London took place in 1866 and it was carried out as nearly as possible as in Rome, with the co-operation of the various Religious Orders in London — Passionists, Dominicans, Carmelites, Servites and so on, who sang High Masses and provided the assistants at the altar. Sermons were preached, on some of the days, in German, French and Italian and in the evenings there were sermons in English, and Benediction given by some important ecclesiastical personage. On the concluding evening it was usual for the Archbishop of Westminster to take the service, and Cardinal Manning was wont to preach as well.

It was the practice of the Fathers, as may be gathered from several of the Press notices of the Epiphany celebration at the Italian Church, to appeal to the people at these times for vestments and other religious material for the aid of the Foreign Missions — the same concern in fact which manifested itself so frequently and so powerfully in the apostolic outlook of our Founder which he inscribed in one of the Procures of his great vision of the modern apostolate.

The Octave was celebrated with great splendour until 1893, when the Fathers resolved to discontinue it. Father Michael Carmody, who saw it in its hey-day, used to say that the congregations had dwindled in the latter years and that the considerable expenses connected with the transportation and entertainment of the assisting clergy made it very onerous. The surging popularity of the annual Mount Carmel Procession made it inexpedient for the two events to continue side by side in the church activities, and as a result of these feelings, which had been growing over the years, the Octave was dropped. A pity!

It is also worthy of note that these early Fathers, now that their numbers were growing, engaging too in the preaching of popular missions. The Italian church had become a parish undertaking, but our priests did not become so absorbed in that ministry as to lose sight of the wider vision of the

work of our Society. The priests whose names are recorded in the Press of the period as preachers of missions in various places are Fathers Faa di Bruno and Kirner.

We have seen above how Mr. Coventry Patmore was impressed by the prowess of Fr. Henry Arkell in detaining the would-be murderer at the Italian Church. Mr. Patmore was at this time living in Hastings and the nearest church where he could assist at Mass was St. Leonard's-on-Sea — a place not unknown to the early Pallottines, for its church had been founded by Fr. Pius Melia — and Mr. Coventry was anxious to have a place of worship nearer home.

Along the High Street of Hastings, picturesque with its high pavements and its timbered Tudor houses, there stood a seventeenth-century house with a large garden attached. It had once been a farm-house, but the supporting land had been gradually sold off, till now just a scrap was left. On the 25th of October of 1880 the Pallottine Fathers purchased this property and the lease of an adjoining piece of land for £2500, from their own resources, and Fr. Kirner was requested to take charge of the place, temporarily, and to select a room in the house which would be suitable as a temporary chapel. At a meeting of the Fathers in London, held on October 26th, it was decided that the temporary chapel should be opened on All Saints Day and that an altar should be sent down from London to be installed in it. Whether the chapel was really opened and Mass said on the lst of November of the year 1880, we cannot determine. Anyhow, the following item appeared in The Tablet some months later:

> "The ancient sea port of Hastings (which many visitors prefer to its more aristocratic sister, St. Leonards) has at length the benefit of a Catholic Mission conceded to it. The Fathers of the Pious Society of Missions, to whose care it has been entrusted, have opened a temporary chapel in the High-Street, where Masses are said at nine and eleven on Sundays. This is a great boon to the inhabitants and visitors, as the church at St. Leonards is a long uphill journey... Through the generosity of Mr. Coventry Patmore, a sum of five thousand pounds has been given provided a similar sum be subscribed by the Catholic public. A design for the proposed new church (which will be placed under the dedication of Our Lady Star of the Sea) has been supplied by the architect Mr. Basil Champneys. It will be one hundred and forty feet long and sixty feet wide and will be erected on half an acre of ground purchased in High-Street." [6]

---

[6] Tablet 12.3.81.

A year elapsed before the foundation-stone of the church was laid, a ceremony which took place on the 28th of March, 1882, and was performed by the Auxiliary Bishop of Southwark.

> "The church which is to be erected at the joint expense of Mr. Coventry Patmore of 'The Mansion,' Hastings, and the Fathers of the Pious Society of Missions, will consist of nave, chancel, aisles and apse and sacristy with organ chamber above. The eastern portion of the north aisle is treated as a transept of two bays and will be fitted as chauntries... As the ground falls rapidly to the east, that portion of the church will have a basement below it, which will eventually be used for schools, when it will contain a central hall and two schools rooms. On the completion of the basement it is intended to fit it up as a temporary church to be used till the permanent church is completed... Its estimated cost is about £ 10,000."[7]

Some difference of opinion arose between Mr. Patmore and our Fathers during the course of the erection of the church. What its precise nature was, we do not know, but it impelled Mr. Patmore to write the following letter to The Tablet shortly before the opening of the church for public worship:

> 'As the new church in Hastings is now nearly finished and is soon to be opened, it seems a fitting time to correct a misunderstanding that appears to exist in some quarters about the cost of the building — a misunderstanding which may be prejudicial to the interests of the PSM, on the one hand, or a misconception of what I have done on the other. My part in the work is the fabric of the church proper, from the floor upwards. The land, priest-house and the extensive and costly basement storey below the street level, including the great crypt — now used as a temporary church — the schools, etc., together with all fittings and furnishings not coming under the head of the fabric, have been or are to be provided and built at the cost of the Society. My share, the fabric of the church proper, has already been paid by me, costing about £ 5300, with the exception of about £ 300 which is yet to be paid. But the cost of all else has been, or is to be, defrayed by the Society. The Fathers have had to borrow heavily on the security of their London property, in order to carry out their part of the undertaking and it is for *this* part of the work that help has been, and probably will be, solicited from the Catholic public. I shall also be glad if you will allow me this opportunity of correcting another error which affects me more personally. I have heard it that in building a 'Memorial Church' to my late wife I have only been carrying out her intentions. I beg distinctly to deny she ever, by writing or word of mouth, expressed any intention of that sort. During her

[7] Ib. 1.4.82.

lifetime indeed we used to talk sometimes about the necessity for a new church at Hastings... The church of 'Our Lady Star of the Sea' is a purely freewill offering on my part, to the honour of God and the memory of one of His humblest and most devoted children." [8]

Coming as it did in the heyday of the Gothic Revival in England, the church attacted much attention. Here is a contemporary description of the building:

"Built of the undressed flints of the neighbourhood, with dressings of hewn sandstone, the extreme length of the church is about 140 feet and the extreme width 59 feet, of which 23 feet belong to the nave. The internal height to the crown of the vaulting is 37 feet; the extreme height of the aisles is 18 feet. In design the work has a general resemblance to Howden church in Yorkshire, one of the purest perpendicular types in England. The east end is treated as an apse; at the west, facing High-Street, the gable comprises a base to a cross rising 21 feet across the ridge and passing beneath the large and graceful windows to rest on a mass of battlemented mouldings above the principal doorway. This front comprises, besides the tracery, niches for statuary and some carefully-thought-out minor elements, giving character to the whole. A turret for a sanctus bell is to be built at the east end and rise 23 feet, above the plain parapets that crown the walls. The clerestory of the nave consists of seven windows of three lights each, with the foil tracery in the heads. The apse proper has three windows, the chancel two more."

"The panel tracery occupied the base of these windows and comprises graceful trefoils. On the north side is a chantry designed for masses of the dead — the founder and his family. The tracery of the Chantry windows emphasises the nature of that section and is somewhat richer than the other tracery. One of the striking features is the original treatment of the vaults of the aisles which form a quadrant between the nave and the exterior walls; what may be called a half-barrel vault is thus displayed with great constructional advantages because it performs the duty ordinarily appropriated to the flying buttresses of English or Pointed architecture. The ribs of groining have been ingeniously, adapted to this arrangement. A good organ balcony is an emphatic feature of the interior of the building... This church deserves careful study not only on account of the economy of its construction but for its fitness to service and remarkable elegance and simplicity."

In the end, the church cost, excluding fittings, almost £15,000. The Patmore donation of £5,000 was, therefore, insufficient and our Fathers had to incur a debt of nearly ten thousand pounds. The resources of the Hastings mission were

---

[8] Ib. 1.5.83.

scanty and for many years the interest on this sum was paid by the London house until finally a generous legacy left to our Society enabled the Fathers to pay off the debt.

The church was opened on the 2nd of July of 1883 in a splendid ceremony at which three bishops attended: the bishop of Southwark, the bishop of Portsmouth and the bishop of Amycla and some twenty priests, amongst them Dr. Faa di Bruno, who had travelled from Italy expressly for the occasion.

"The church was beautifully ornamented for the occasion with plants and the altar, though of a temporary character, was most splendidly fitted up. The choir and band of the church... was supplemented by the choir of the Italian church, London, under the Rev. Dr. Kirner. The Bishop's train was carried by Mr. James H. M. Stuart Muldray, nephew of the Earl of Limerick. The Bishop of Portsmouth, assisted by Fr. Bannin, celebrated the Mass... The Bishop of Emmaus preached the sermon, on the parable of the Mustard Seed. A telegram was then read from the Holy Father of congratulations, conferring the Apostolic Benediction on the congregation. The congregation then adjourned to the crypt and partook of luncheon, prepared by Mr. T. W. Hine of Queen's Road, Hastings, in a style which gave great satisfaction. After the repast, the Rev. Faa di Bruno and the Bishop of Southwark each briefly wished success for the church and the company then separated." [9]

The beautiful Lady Chapel in the Hastings Church was the gift of a lady member of the congregation. It was installed and blessed in the month of July of the year 1884.

The splendid High Altar which now adorns the church was delicated in the year 1891.

"The ceremony of the dedication of the new High altar of St. Mary Star of the Sea church in Hastings took place in July. The priests and servers, with acolytes and crossbearer, walked in procession to the altar, where the ceremony was performed by Very Reverend Fr. Bannin. High Mass was then performed, Fr. Bannin PSM celebrant, Fr. Rossette SJ deaconn, Fr. M. German, subdeacon, Fr. F. Gocher PSM Master of Ceremonies. Present in the sanctuary were Frs. D. Crescitelli PSM (Rector of the church), King, Page and Lenterurier PSM. The sermon was preached by Fr. Bannin, who took as his text the words: In this day shall there be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt." [10]

In the same account we find the following description of the altar and its particulars:

---

[9] Ib. 7.7.83.
[10] Ib. 1.8.91.

"The new high altar erected in this church is the gift of an anonymous lady and cost about £ 1500. It is built of the finest Derbyshire alabaster in the early Tudor or Perpendicular style. The table of the altar is of a deep red material, having for frontal a beautiful while panel with the subject of the resurrection in half-relief. The tabernacle and throne for the most Holy Sacrament is very richly carved and the door is of silver in repousse work and is exquisitely jewelled. In the reredos are some twelve figures, in pure white alabaster, representing in the lower tier the Four Evangelists and S.S. Peter and Paul; in the upper, Moses and Elias, St. Joseph, St. Anne, St. John the Baptist and St. Elizabeth. These are covered by delicately carved canopies and elaborate cornices. On the other side of the reredos and over the doors leading to the back of the altar is a group of figures, the one showing Abraham preparing to sacrifice his son, and the other portraying the Israelites gathering the manna. The whole rises to a height of 22 feet and is crowned by a statue of Our Lady Star of the sea, to whom the edifice is dedicated."

In the centre of the Piedmontese plain, about halfway he-tween the ancient cities of Asti and Alessandria stands the little village of Masio. Near it flows the Tanaro, affluent of the Po; nearby passes the international railway from Genoa through Turin to Paris. The hardworking peasants have rendered this plain very fertile and it is closely populated with farm-houses, cornfields and vineyards, and frequent villages and towns.

The family of the Faa, lords of the manor of Bruno possessed considerable property in the neighbourhood of Masio, a of which became the inheritance of the Abate Giuseppe, second son of the Marquis Faa di Bruno. During his missionary life in England Dr. Faa used the income from his property for the various enterprises in which he engaged and when he returned to Italy after his election as Rector General of the Pious Society of Missions in 1869, he determined to devote his inheritance to the erection of a College for the Missions and he chose as the site for it a parcel of land known as the Abbazia, on a bluff looking down on a loop of the Tanaro. Using the local materials and local labour, the building was commenced in the month of August, 1877 and by the end of November of the following year it was finished — a fine three-storey edifice with individual rooms for the inmates, crowned with a central tower. We have seen elsewhere how Dr. Kirner, the first Rector, and the students transferred from Ipswich, entered into residence.

The building had a capacity of seventy students and was destined principally for aspirants of our community, though in

the beginning a certain proportion of externs were admitted to the classes and there were some resident guest-students for the secular clergy as well. Though Dr. Faa di Bruno's official residence, as Rector-General of the Society, was fixed in Rome, he spent a good deal of time in Masio and finally, about 1882, obtained leave from the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars to reside there more or less permanently.

The College was dedicated by its Founder to St. Patrick; it became known as St. Patrick's College for Foreign Missions.

There was of course a domestic chapel, but the district of the Abbazia was considerably removed from any public church and there was an extensive population in the neighbourhood. Dr. Faa resolved to erect for them a public church, but as his own funds were well-nigh exhausted, he obtained the permission of the Holy See to convert to this purpose an ecclesiastical benefice which had been in his possession for over forty years. It was an ancient benefice, created in the year 1665 by an Alessandrian lawyer named Auguste Cairo, whose income and obligations were to be conferred successively upon some priest of the Alessandria region who was a Doctor of Theology and could demonstrate nobility of birth. This Cairo was, in appears, a collateral ancester of Dr. Faa, who applied to the Trustees and obtained benefice in 1840. It was under lay patronage and after the anti-clerical laws came into force in Piedmont after 1860, Dr. Faa had considerable difficulty in preserving his title to it. The circumstances under which he procured the conversion of the benefice and the purpose he had in mind may be gathered from the text of a letter on the subject which Fr. William Whitmee published in The Tablet:

> "The Very Reverend Dr. Faa di Bruno (he writes), urged by an inflexible zeal for the salvation of souls, having already founded and brought to a flourishing condition a College for Foreign Missions, has now undertaken the arduous task of supplying a church for the wants of the College and of a population of more than twelve hundred souls who are scattered here and there in the vicinity of the College and very distant from any church. His Holiness Leo XIII has assigned out of a benefice lately held by Dr. Faa di Bruno the sum of thirty thousand francs (£ 1200) towards the expenses of the church and the Rev. Dr. Faa commenced the building, to be dedicated to Our Lady Queen of Apostles. As another equal amount is required to finish the Church and as the population is very poor, I am appealing to the generosity of English Catholics on his behalf, especially as Dr. Faa is so intima-

tely connnected with the English people... The alumni of the College are for the most part, English-speaking." [11]

We do not know what was the result of this appeal, but the church was in due course finished and decorated with frescoes. There used to be one on the ceiling, which symbolized the Bark of Peter, the author permitting himself the artistic license of placing Dr. Faa in charge of the helm! This church is the first ever dedicated by any Pallottine to the Patroness of our Society.

The insecurity of tenure for certain types of ecclesiastical property began to weigh on Dr. Faa's mind when he had finished the building of the College. The Italian Government after the occupation of Rome and the consolidation of the Kingdom of Italy had seized on many religious establishments. The house of San Salvatore is Onda, headquarters of the Society, and the Rocca Priora house had been seized in 1875. What was to be done with the Masio property?

Our Society had not yet been divided into provinces, of course, but there were two establishments in England — the Italian church and the Ipswich house, which, after it was closed, was replaced by the Hastings house. The convenience of associating the English houses and the Masio foundation into one province was mooted in 1880. On December 19th of that year Dr. Faa notes in the Diary which he was keeping at the Masio house that the question of placing this house under the London authorities was voted on favourably. The decision could not, however, be implemented just then, because, after an application was made to the Holy See, it was judged best to leave things as they were for the moment. [12]

The London Fathers were heartily in favour of the prompt establishment of this proposed English Province, for at a meeting held in London on the 17th of February of 1881 it was resolved to urge upon Dr. Faa to have it created as soon as possible.[13] Some months later, on the 26th of October the London Fathers took cognizance and approved of a letter from Dr. Faa who suggested that the English houses, together with the Masio College, should be erected into a quasi-Province. On the 30th

---

[11] Ib. 25.11.82.
[12] Arch. Gen. Busta Masio.
[13] Ib. Busta London; London Consulta Book.

of October of the next year another meeting was held on the same subject and it was decided that the Province or quasi-Province, should consist of the London, Hastings and Masio houses and the staffs of the new organization were listed thus: Five priests in London; two in Hastings; three in Masio; one student in London, eighteen between Masio and Rome, six of them professed, and one lay-brother. Masio was assigned as a novitiate.

The new Province or quasi-Province did not in the event attain canonical status, but it is certain that a quasi-Provincial, in the person of Dr. Kirner, was appointed sometime in 1882, as appears from the minutes of a meeting in London on December 29th, 1882.[14] The arrangement cannot have lasted long, whatever it was, for in a short time, as we shall see, Fr. Kirner was sent to the United States.

Dr. Faa di Bruno persisted, however, in his intention of handing over the Masio property, and all his personal property as well, to the London house. In the archives of the Irish Province in London there is extant a title-deed of the transfer of the Mario and other properties of Dr. Faa di Bruno, to Frs. Bannin, Crescitelli, Arkell, Carmody and Monselle, who were the trustees of the London property. The deed was drawn up and signed in the city of Turin on the llth of June, 1885, the signatories being Dr. Faa and Father Monselle who exhibited a power of attorney to act in the name of the other trustees. And in a letter written some months later from Rome to Fr. Bannin in London, Dr. Faa makes it quite clear that the transfer was not a mere legal fiction, but a veritable transaction. This letter is also extant in the London archives of the Irish Province.

The question of the Rules of our Society ,so long debated among the early Fathers, received its due meed of attention amongst the Fathers in England. We noticed above that Dr. Faa, on his appointment as General had attempted to solve this problem by drawing up, presenting to the Roman Vicariate and obtaining approval for a Rule, which however, was disallowed two months after the approval had been granted. Writing about this in his Masio Diary, under date September 16th, 1879, Dr. Faa writes thus:

> " Years ago I made a summary of Rules which did not meet with approval, because they were too divergent from those of Our

[14] Ib.

Father, the Servant of God Vincent Pallotti; I insisted then that they should draw up a summary themselves. Finally the London people drew up a summary, sent it on, and I went over it here at the College and I agreed with it. Dr. Kirner was appointed to go to London, bring these rules for confrontation with these which are deposited in the Congregation of Rites. His expenses were paid from London" [15]

Added to this note at a later date are the words: "They were redrafted anew in 1884." Dr. Faa di Bruno paid a visit to England in the early part of that year (1884) and amongst matters dealt with during his stay in London we find the question of the Rules. The meeting was held on April 22nd, and those present were: Dr. Faa, Kirner, Bannin, Arkell, Whitmee, Kepf and Carmody.

"It was proposed (the minutes state) by Fr. Bannin and agreed by all that Fr. Superior (Dr. Faa), Whitmee and Carmody form themselves into a committee to draw up the rules to be submitted to the Sacred Congregation. These rules are to "be extracted from those in our Founder's writings, such additions or modifications as are considered necessary being added." [16]

This draft was, we gather, composed. A year later Dr. Faa writes from Rome (March 1885) asking the opinion of the Fathers in London about suppressing some of the rules in the draft before presenting it to the Congregation. The London Fathers reply, unanimously, that there must not be any changes in that draft. A week later (April 8th, 1885) Dr. Faa writes again to the London Fathers, asking them to reconsider the wording of their resolution. In the course of his letter he points out that it is not customary to present all the rules of a religious Society for approval. The issue, it would seem, concerned the offices of Administrator (sic) and Spiritual Father. And now the London Fathers agree to allow some minor rules to be modified. [17]

We are at a loss to understand Dr. Faa's statement that it was not customary to submit all rules to the Sacred Congregation for approval. It may be that present in his mind was the distinction between rules and constitutions; a distinction which, by the way, found a place in the text of the Constitutions published in 1890.

---

[15] Arch. Gen. Busta Masio.
[16] Arch. Gen. Busta London, Lond. Cons. Bk.
[17] Ib.

We are not aware of the precise point involved regarding the Administrator and the Spiritual Father; the London decision was that the rules, as drafted, about these offices should be submitted to the Sacred Congregation.

Before their deliberations on this affair were concluded, a new communication from Dr. Faa placed before them the text of a supplemental chapter of the rules, dealing with the matter of a Novitiate. The London Fathers suggest that some changes be made in this chapter. Firstly, the Master of Novices must give his conferences at stated times, not to be left to his discretion; a horarium should be drawn up for his guidance; secondly, the formal accusation of faults is to be included in the time-table; thirdly, the morning meditation of novices must be of one hour's duration; fourthly, the study of Sacred Scripture and the recitation of the breviary did not appear to the Fathers as imperative, unless, as regards the former, the reading of a chapter of the New Testament as part of the spiritual reading, and as regards the latter, the Little Office of Our Lady and the Office of the dead; fifthly, the timetables of novices are to be drawn up by the General Council and no master of novices is to have the power to change them without permission, asked and obtained toties quoties. These decisions were taken on April 9th, 1885. Finally in the year 1890 a Rule was drawn up, approved by the Generalate and submitted to the Holy See, who, in the person of a Visitator, stated that this rule was in conformity with the mind of the Founder, but even so, in communications made to this Visitor, by letter and by word of mouth, general agreement was still manifestly lacking and the whole matter was once more gone into during the First General Chapter of 1896.

The eighties of the last century witnessed a considerable increase in the personnel of our Society. New foundations were made at home and overseas and the following names were added to the list of places connected with the story of the English-language section of our community: Hastings, New York, Montevideo, Mercedes and San Silvestro in Capite, Rome. To a considerable extent the London house contributed to all these ventures, but, before illustrating the connection, we will first deal with other offers and initiatives which did not prosper.

On July 15, 1882, the Fathers in London deliberated whether it was at that time convenient to open a house in Ireland, and after some discussion, the matter was deferred. A fortnight

later the proprietor of Deer Park, a Mr. Colin Lindsay, approached our priests, asking them to take over the chaplaincy of his private chapel, at the same time offering them facilities for establishing a mission at Honiston. The offer was not entertained.

The consciousness that our Society is bound by the will of our Founder to gather around itself groups of lay collaborators who will assist it in its works and share in its privileges and its ideals, found expression amongst the English-speaking Fathers. Fr. Raphael Melia, for instance, states that as soon as the construction of the church is completed in London, the Society must organize its external associates. In the year 1869 Fr. Aemilian Kirner, Rector of the Italian Church after Fr. Faa's appointment as Rector-General performed this work and printed an 8-page booklet entitled "Letters of Aggregation to the Pious Society of Missions" which was a faithful translation of the explanatory leaflet drawn up by the Founder himself. The Register in which the names of these Aggregates were set down was kept in Rome, but it has lamentably been lost, so that we cannot know many these London Aggregates were. Fr. John Hettenkofer, the historian of our Society, expresses the opinion that this Register may have been sent to London for the purpose of filling in the names and that it may have disappeared in the course of its journeyings between that city, Masio, where at the end of the seventies the Rector-General was usually to be found, and Rome. The London Consulta Book has, in 1879, a reference to the Society's Aggregates in that place. After Dr. Kirner succeeded in opening the first Pallottine house in the New World, he proceeded to find and enrol Aggregates for our Society in New York.

The opportunity of making a foundation in the United States was proposed to the London Fathers by Fr. Whitmee as early as 1883 (Feb. 6th) and was unanimously accepted. Some time later, Archbishop Corrigan, who was at the time coadjutor-Archbishop of New York invited our Society to take over a mission in that city and at a meeting held in London on April 23rd of that year, at which Dr. Faa was present, it was decided to accept the offer and send Dr. Kirner to the States. He did not stand upon the order of his going, for The Tablet reports that:

"The Very Reverend Dr. Kirner, who has so long and so successfully worked at the Italian Church, and done good work for the

Catholics of Central London on the Board of Guardians, has been appointed to establish a mission for the Italians at New York, for which city he sails on Monday next." [18]

The congregation amidst whom Dr. Kirner was to work was already in being, as may be gleaned from the following item in the same paper:

"On Sunday April 10th was witnessed the solemn inauguration of the new chapel, dedicated to Our Lady of Mount Carmel, for the use of the Italian Colony, established near Harlem Bridge, in New York City. The magnificent statue of the Blessed Virgin is placed provisionally in a spacious hall hired for the purpose in 111th Street, near First Avenue till such time as the number of Catholic Italians augment sufficiently to enable the colony to raise funds for the construction of a Church, such as will satisfy their devotion and requirements, and in some measure counteract the efforts of the so-called 'Italian Mission,' which under the conduct of the apostate priest and friars from Naples and elsewhere and favoured by the high protection of Protestant ecclesiastical dignitaries, is leading astray many of their unwary countrymen. The Catholic Italians have already done much in purchasing the aforesaid statue, hiring the hall and procuring the ministry of a zealous priest of their nationality. Their ambition, writes the Progresso Italo-Americano of New York, is not limited to the mere possession of their own church, they intend that edifice to become the centre of fraternal union; a meeting-place of good brethren and fellow-countrymen; an opportunity for reciprocal instruction and self-improvement." [19]

Dr. Kirner did not let the grass grow under his feet after his arrival in the city of New York. He immediately took charge of the congregation entrusted to him and the first results of his labours are set out in this account which was published, again in the Tablet:

"The spiritual needs of the Italian Catholics, who of late years have become very numerous in the city of New York, are being well attended to by the ecclesiastical authorities; four lots of ground for the site of a new Italian church have been purchased at a cost of 14,500 dollars, the Italians contributing nothing to this sum; and on Sunday, June the 11th, Dr. Aemilianus Kirner, the priest appointed to take charge of the mission, celebrated Mass in the temporary chapel at 126th Street. He was for some time Rector of the Italian Church of St. Peter in Hatton Garden London, served by the Fathers of the Pious Society of Missions

---

[18] Tablet 1.5.84.
[19] Ib. 8.5.84.

and the expression of regret was general at his departure from a field of labour where his efforts had proved so fruitful of good to the parish under his care." [20]

This good priest lived up to his dynamic reputation, for in a very short time we find that he proceeded to erect a church for the Italians on the site provided by the archbishopric of New York. A contemporary account of these efforts, which includes some interesting details, including a very curious one which involved the designation proposed for the church, is supplied by the same newspaper.

"The corner stone of the new Italian mission church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, 15th Street and Pleasant Avenue, was solemnly blessed on September 28th last, by the Coadjutor-Archbishop Corrigan. The entire work of digging the foundations, which would have entailed an outlay of one thousand dollars, was performed by poor Italian labourers without pecuniary recompense; they likewise did at half-price the labour of carrying bricks and mortar and gave moreover one day a week free in the same occupation and would cheerfully work in a similar manner in laying bricks, were they not excluded by the rules of the "Brick Mason's Union", which, the Freeman's Journal of New York says is controlled by Scotchmen. The Italian colony, too poor to find money, vie with one another in offering assistance in a more practical way, some furnishing carts and horses for transportation of building materials, others giving personal service; others providing drink and food for the labourers, each striving in short to lend a helping hand. The pastor of the new church, the Rev. Father Kirner of the Pious Society of Missions, himself a practical builder, oversees the labour thereby saving another source of expense. Among so many willing hands and hearts we may shortly look for the completion of the new edifice, which will be one hudred feet by seventy. The church was to have been dedicated under the invocation of St. Vincent, in anticipation of the canonization of the Venerable Vincent Pallotti, founder of the Pious Society of Missions, whose cause is now before the Sacred Congregation of Rites; but the Italians in their deep devotion to the Scapular and to Our Lady pleaded so earnestly that their church be placed under the title of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, that the authorities were forced to yield to their unanimous desire. This is the first church in the diocese under this invocation. A parochial school for Italian children has also been opened by Fr. Kearney, at Mott-Street, in the charge of Fr. Mazzziotti." [21]

Fr. Kirner finished the church, aided by his parishoners and then set about erecting a parish school, and once again he

---

[20] Ib. 16.8.84.
[21] Ib. 8.11.84.

availed himself of as much voluntary labour as he could muster. This time too he acted as the overseer, an activity which led to his premature death. For as he was making a tour of inspection of the half-built walls of the edifice, one of these gave way under him and he was precipitated to the ground from a considerable height. Two workmen were killed and Fr. Kirner was mortally wounded and after a couple of days' agony, God called him home, to the great loss of our Society and the bitter sorrow of his companions. His death took place on October 18th, 1887.

His place at Mount Carmel church was taken by Fr. Carmody, who continued his predecessor's building programme and consolidated the parochial features of the mission. A picture of his activities may be had from this excerpt from The Tablet, which is based on a statement made in the New York Sun by Mgr. Preston, the Vicar General of New York, in answer to criticism that the Italians in that city were being neglected by the Catholic authorities:

> "The Rev. Fr. Kirner founded the church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel at 115th Street for the benefit of the Italian population. Six masses are said in it every Sunday and at the High Mass a sermon in Italian is preached. Every morning some of the fathers sit in their confessionals, for, with the Italians, it is the custom to go to confession in the morning rather than in the evening. Here are celebrated with as much pomp as possible the principal Italian festivities. Sisters from Rome have been invited to come and open a school for the children of this mission. By practical instructions and frequent visiting, the fathers are gradually getting a hold on the people, and it is their opinion that these Italians will be in the future much better off spiritually than ever they were in their own country. There is a constantly increasing number coming to Mass and to the Sacraments and during the past twelve months there are many who come to confession and communion every two or three months. There has been a marked improvement especially in their manner of regarding marriage. For a long time they woul be married only at the City Hall, and did not come to the priest at all. Then they were induced to come to the church after their marriage at the City Hall. Now, all those married here, with very few exceptions, do not go to the City Hall at all, as the Fathers obtain for them the legal certificates. The number of Italians in this parish is estimated at five thousand." [22]

We make a parenthesis at this point to express our surprise, which no doubt will be shared by our readers, at the amount

---

[22] Ib. 2.2.89.

of publicity which our Fathers in the early days enjoyed for their doings and undertakings. The items which we have resurrected from the files of a couple of representative newspapers are by no means all the material of this sort extant. When one reflects how few these Fathers were, how unspectacular their activities were, how modest their general attitudes, one must conclude that they must have had many friends amongst the journalists of the period who generously placed their pens at the service of the unselfish apostolic labours of our priests.

The original Catholic population in the Mount Carmel district was Italian. New York was a very fluid city about that time and a great many Irish moved into the district during the pastorate of Father Carmody. This priest, during the five years he was at Mount Carmel finished the building of the school which had cost Dr. Kirner his life. He was transferred to Hastings in the month of July of the year 1892 and his Mount Carmel parishoners presented him with an Address, read in the School Hall by Michael J. A. McCaffery, Ll. D, in which the following passage occurs:

> "For nearly five years, in the intimate and sacred relation of pastor, you have by your teaching, and, much more, by your example, everywhere and always sought to influence for good the lives committed to your pastoral care. Our beautiful church, with all its becoming appointments for the services of religion this beautiful schoolhouse, perfectly furnished and equipped, wherein we are assembled — these will remain enduring monuments of your labours and your zeal... We would be remiss indeed if we failed to profit by the occasion to express to your reverend assistants, the members of your illustrious Society associated with you in this mission, our profound admiration for the zeal with which they have cooperated with you in all your labours..." [23]

These sentiments were corroborated with a purse presented to Father Carmody, containing a sum of almost one thousand dollars. The vast majority of the contributors bore Irish names.

In 1897 Fr. John Dulan was brought from Mercedes, Argentina, to become Rector of Mount Carmel and he fulfilled this office with signal success for nearly eleven years. Elsewhere this writer has published an account of some of the achievements of Fr. Dolan as Rector of the Mount Carmel church; here we will extract a passage to show the situation of the parish under Fr. Dolan in the year 1904:

---

[23] S. Silv. Arch. Carmody Papers.

"There are, strictly speaking, two churches at Mount Carmel: the church proper, which is approached by a low flight of stairs from the street... is the Irish church; the basement of this church is devoted to the Italian community. There are in all eight priests, five for the Irish and American community and three for the Italian... The different services at Mount Carmel are thronged in both the Irish and the Italian divisions every Sunday... As many as 14,000 people attend Mass in this church on a Sunday." [27]

The gradual increase of the Italian population led to the increase of the Italian staff of the church, and hence, when the Society was divided into Provinces, Mount Carmel was ascribed to the Italian Province.

We will deal now with another important foundation which came into the hands of the English-speaking Fathers of the Society. This is the famous church and house of San Silvestro in Capite, situated in the heart of Rome, which has fulfilled a very useful role in the Irish Province since 1919, at which date the house attached to the church first came into use as a second studentate for the Province.

The church of San Silvestro is of the most venerable antiquity. Some historians say that Pope St. Dionysius established a church or oratory on the site, which was later enlarged by the emperor Constantine. It is said that St. Gregory the Great made it one of the Lenten stations (the fourth Thursday) and pronounced in it his Ninth Homily. From the 'Constitutum' of Pope Paul I and from the 'Liber Pontificalis' we know that Paul I built here a church in 761, on the site of his family home and that hither he transported a great quantity of relics and remains from the catacombs outside the walls, in order to save them from the depredations of the Longobards. Chief amongst these relics were the bodies of St. Stephen Pope and Martyr and St. Sylvester Pope and Confessor. Two marble tablets, dating from the eighth century, which are today inserted in the wall on both sides of the church door, list the bodies of the other saints who were brought here at this time; amongst them are enumerated no less than seven Popes and the boy-martyr St. Tarcisius. The foundations of the edifice erected by Pope Paul are the foundations of the present church and perhaps also of the adjoining clergy-house. These foundations, which consist of large blocks of travertine were taken, it is maintained by many archeologists, from the walls of Republican

---

[24] Memoir of Fr. Dolan, by J. S. Gaynor, The S. Cross, Bs. As. 1958.

Rome; a portion of them were uncovered when the present crypt was excavated in 1907, and may still be seen; another portion came to light when the funeral vault beneath the Sacred Heart Chapel was opened during the course of the recent renovation (1961). The pattern of these foundations shows that the original Pauline church was of the Roman basilica type; when the church was almost completely reconstructed in 1594-96 by Francesco da Volterra the present design was superimposed on the ancient foundations. Paul I gave the church and monastery of San Silvestro to a community of monks using the Greek liturgy, probably fugitives from the iconoclasts and obtained for his foundation a Diploma from Pepin the Short. It has been surmised that about this time the third saint in the title of the church — St. Dionysius — was added as a compliment to this king, St. Dionysius being one of the patrons of Paris, and that in the course of time Dionysius Matyr was confused with Dionysius the third-century Pope. What rule was followed by the original monks of St. Silvestro is not known, it is certain that in the 12th century the Benedictine Rule obtained in it. The beautiful romanesque tower was built at the end of the 12th century. In 1286 the number of monks attached to the monastery and church had dwindled so that year Pope Honorius IV gave the foundation to a community of Poor Clare Nuns founded by the Blessed Margaret Colonna. It became, in the course of the ages, a very wealthy institution, a fact which led to some relaxation in the severity of the rule, which motivated in 1509 an intervention by Pope Julius II, who called in a reformed community of Poor Clares from the monastery of St. James of Florence. The nuns were mainly ladies of high degree and it was the custom for them to receive guests and sometimes children for purposes of education. One such guest was the famous Vittoria Colonna, widowed Marchioness of Pescara, who took up residence in the Monastery in 1525. It is said that the celebrated "Colloqui" between Michelangelo and Vittoria Colonna, so important in Italian literature, took place in the cortile of San Silvestro and the stone bench at the right-hand end of the church atrium is pointed out as the meeting-place of the two personages. Amongst the Monastery pupils, the records mention the names of "Miladis Francesca and Anna" daughters of the unfortunate Earl of Derwentwater; these ladies were admitted in 1736 "at the petition of the Queen of England;" that is, the wife of

the Old Pretender. In Napoleonic times the Monastery was despoiled of all its possessions and the nuns granted pensions from the State. Nuns from other convents of the same rule which were suppressed, were transferred to San Silvestro during this period. During the Revolution of 1849 the Convent was seized and the nuns obliged to go elsewhere, until the return of the Pope to Rome after the flight to Gaeta. After the 1870, part of the building was occupied by soldiers and finally the entire property was confiscated. The last nuns — forty-five in number — were obliged to leave in August 1876 and go to a convent of the Order which had been spared in Trastevere. In 1926 one old nun of this group still survived. The Monastery of San Silvestro was then transformed into the General Post Office of Rome and the original chaplain's quarters, with some additions, were set aside for the clergy of the church. These are the portions, in the main, which are now in the possession of our Society.

The church of San Silvestro got its name when the relics of that saint — his body lies under the High Altar, and his skull is preserved in a reliquary in the sacristy — were transferred here. To the saint's name was added a designation — for there were two other churches dedicated to St. Sylvester in Rome — which at one time was *ad duos hortes;* at, or between, the two gardens; an allusion, it is thought, to the Pincian gardens on one side, and some private garden in some other direction but near at hand. It was also known at one period as the church of St. Sylvester *ad katapauli* — at the home of Paul — and in Renaissance times as San Silvestro *a Campo Marzio,* from its situation near the campus martius of Roman times. In the 12th century we first find it called *in Capite,* as it is known today. We shall see the reason for this apellation presently.

Besides the relics of St. Sylvester mentioned above, this church has possessed for many centuries two other very famous relics: Abgar's Portrait of Christ and the head of St. John Baptist. The first of these is the legendary picture which Our Lord is reputed to have presented to King Abgar of Edessa, who had sought in vain to see Him in the flesh. Panciroli, a Roman historian and antiquarian who wrote at the beginning of the sixteenth century, relates thus the story of the Portrait:

> « Abgar then finding he must renounce the hope of seeing the Lord's face, sent a skilful painter to take His likeness. But having

come into His presence and placed himself in a suitable position for the work, he was so dazzled by the indescribable light shining from that blessed countenance that he tried in vain to represent it. The Lord, seeing his fruitless efforts, asked for a linen cloth, which He caused to be dipped in water and then spread it over His face. His divine image was immediately stamped upon it. He handed it to the painter and told him to carry it to his king."

How this picture found its way from the East (for it is undoubtedly an Eastern picture) is not clear. Some historians allege that the Greek monks who once inhabited San Silvestro brought it with them when they fled from the Iconoclasts; others allege, with more detail, that it was presented to Pope Innocent III by the Emperor Alexis in 1203. Few scholars today defend the authenticity of Abgar's Portrait.

The other great relic is the Head of St. John the Baptist. The body of the Precursor was, as St. Matthew's Gospel (Chap. 14) tells us, buried by his disciples. According to the historian Rufinus it was unearthed by pagans during the reign of Julian the Apostate and burned. The ashes were preserved, however, and sent to Alexandria where they passed into the possession of St. Athanasius and, towards the end of the 11th century, were taken to Genoa, where they rest today in the Cathedral of St. Laurence. There are various legends and traditions regarding the resting-place of the Saint's head after the martyrdom; of these the most reliable relates that the head was placed in a sealed jar and left in the dungeon of Machaera, where it remained till the Peace of the Church. We hear of it in Cilicia, in Calcedonia and later in Constantinople, and later still in Emessa. The historians Theofanes and Paul of Deacon refer to it in this latter place. It was then taken once more to Constantinople and from here, at some date not ascertained, to Rome. It has been suggested with some show of probability that the Greek monks who staffed St. Sylvester's church in the Eternal City may have been responsible for this translation. Anyhow, it is known that in the year 1130 there existed, as an adjunt of the Monastery and church of San Silvestro a little chapel known as San Giovannino in Capite, where the relic was preserved. The Roman Pontiffs from this time forward accepted the genuiness of the relic. Martin IV (1281-85) enclosed the head in the splendid silver reliquary in which it is preserved to this day; Boniface VIII (1294-1303) granted the church of San Silvestro, for St. John's Day each year, the

Portiuncula Indulgence; he also presented a splendid tiara to the shrine which was extant till the sack of Rome by the Spaniards in 1525, when somebody made away with it; Boniface IX (1389-1404), Martin V (1417-1431), Leo X (1513-1522) showed great veneration for it; Clement VIII (1592-1605) proclaimed its authenticity during the Apostolic Visitation in the last year of his reign. On the 19th of September, 1870, the evening before the Breach of Porta Pia, Pius IX sent a carriage to San Silvestro to bring this relic and the Portrait of Abgar to the Vatican for safe-keeping. Leo XIII caused the Head of St. John to be exposed for veneration several times in his private chapel in the Vatican and he personally composed the Latin verses which adorn the silver pedestal which, at the end of the last century, the Vatican Chapter had made for the base of the reliquary. It can be said, therefore, without fear of contradiction that there is a Papal tradition connected with the relic at San Silvestro. This is confirmed by the entry in the Roman Martyrology for August 29th. The tradition is accepted by the Bollandists by Baronius and by Butler, and even by Gregorovius.

The head of St. John Baptist, to which fragments of dessicated skin adhere, is not anatomically complete, for the jawbone and a portion of the bone at the base of the skull are missing; the jawbone being preserved in the Cathedral of Viterbe, where a curious mediaeval inscription records that for many years this relic (barba Ioannis) lay hidden in the wall and was rediscovered in 1376.

The authenticity of San Silvestro's greatest relic — the Head of St. John the Baptist has been called in question, as has happened with other major relics, including those of the True Cross. But the studies and the modestly-formulated conclusions of reputable historians are one thing: quite another is the facile witticism of the hagiographically illiterate person who has read, or perhaps heard something about Crusaders' relics and has learned from some traveller that in Damascus the guide of a certain mosque will show you a spot in which he tells you that the head of the Baptist is buried; perhaps he has even been to Amiens and has been shown a reputed portion of the head of St. John the Baptist which has been preserved in the Cathedral of that place since the beginning of the 13th century. The venerable relics which the church exposes for public cult have long traditions behind them, no doubt, but confirmation for them

is of course desirable. In 1962, on the occasion of the restoration of the church of San Silvestro, the great reliquary of the Head of St. John the Baptist in San Silvestro was re-examined, with all due ecclesiastical authority, in the presence of the Cardinal-Titular of the church, Cardinal Valerio Valeri; also present were Fr. James Maher, Provincial of the Pallottine Fathers, Fr. Vincent Smith, Rector of the church, Fr. Francesco Moccia, Fr. Michael Power, Fr. J. S. Gavnor, the dottoresa Toesca, Dr. Bertelli and various other persons, who acted as witnesses.

The examination of the reliquary itself showed that the central portion of the shrine is a work of late fourteenth-century Italian origin, inlaid with very rare enamel-work. When the sealed case of crytal and glass, ribbed with silver, in which the relic is encased, was examined, it was found that it was surmounted by two jewelled crown of thirteenth-century work. The relic itself was prot ected at the top by a cushion of cotton-wool, into which many little packets of unidentified bones and fragments had been inserted. One of the little packets bore a legend in gothic script, which stated that these were bones from the body of St. Stephen Pope and Martyr. Two brass coins were also found, which proved to be early twelfth-century pieces. There was also found a large folded cloth, of the type known as a "brandeum" used in the wrapping of bodies of martyrs. The San Silvestro "brandeum" was desintegrated in parts, but the markings on the sounder parts were distinctly visible; competent scholars have described it as an example of sixth or seventh century ethiopic work. All these facts, taken together and in conjunction with the relic to which they are attached, show that the *Caput Sti Ioannis Baptistae* is certainly no Crusader's relic, whatever that may mean, and that the tradition is supported by the facts available. The old seals of the Reliquary showed that it had not been opened since the sixteenth century. On the 7th of March, 1962, it was re-sealed with the seal of his Eminence Cardinal Valeri, in the presence of the witnessess cited above.

When the church of San Silvestro was reconstructed at the end of the sixteenth century, the original nave was raised, the aisles turned into side chapels and the vault and apse painted. The two marble columnes sustaining the organ loft and the third column recently discovered embedded in the wall of the Sacred Heart Chapel, are apparently the only fea-

tures of the old church still extant. Early in the seventeenth century the present facade at the street level was constructed.

In the days of its splendour the church and monastery enjoyed the daily services of at least six priests and the present clergy-house was the residence of the Administrator of the Monastery who was nearly always a Prelate. The monastery archives, which are now in the Italian State Archives are amongst the richest private archives in Rome; the parchments which were taken from here and deposited in the State archives stretch back to the ninth century and are the oldest documents in it.

The seizure of the monastery naturally affected the fortunes of the church of San Silvestro. It now became government property and the appointment of the rector became a matter for the civil authorities. There is a tradition that for a short time Giuseppe Garibaldi himself, on a visit to Rome, stayed at the clergy-house! Across the square ,in that part of the piazza San Silvestro which was thrown down when the Mussolini Government enlarged the piazza, a group of low-Church English residents built themselves a conventicle in 1877, under the leadership of a Dr. Gason, an Irish doctor, who had practiced in Rome for more than fifty years. The chapel was dedicated to the Blessed Trinity, but Pius IX produced one of his famous 'bon mots' when he christened it 'the Temple of Jason.' Dr. Gason was a staunch Protestant, but he was no proselytizer and when the Waldensians, some years later ,were seeking out places in which to install their anti-Catholic propaganda centres in Rome, they endeavoured to buy Wr. Gason's temple but, knowing the purpose they would put it to, he refused.

The church and monastery of San Silvestro in Capite were well known to Blessed Vincent Pallotti. The community was inscribed by him in the Society of the Catholic Apostolate on the 6th February of the year 1838; the diploma, signed by our Founder, is now in the State Archives amongst the S. Silvestro papers.[25] The Solemn Octave of the Epiphany (organized by our Founder) was celebrated in this church in the year 1939; in the collections of Pallotti Letters there are three which were addressed by him to the Nuns in the early part of the year 1849, after they had been thrown out of the Monastery by the revolutionaries and had found refuge in the convent of Santa Pudenziana.

---

[25] Replica in S. Silvestro Arch.

It is known that Vincent Pallotti stayed at San Silvestro on at least one occasion. Melia relates the following:

"Cardinal Tiberi having been during three days stricken with apoplexy, had lost his senses and was unable to go to Confession. Vincent being called, he said the Litany of the Blessed Virgin, blessed him and left him an image of the Venerable Gaspar del Bufalo. Having returned to the church of San Silvestro where during those days he resided, on account of the Octave of the Epiphany, he spent the whole night in prayer..."[26]

It seems probable that amongst the nuns who, driven out of their convents by the agents of the French revolutionary government of Italy, found refuge in San Silvestro, there was a relative of Vincent Pallotti; perhaps the same person who is known to have lived with the Pallotti family during Vincent's childhood and is described as his mother's sister. It is certain that in the thirties his relationship with the community became close, for a nun of the monastery, a certain Mother Mary Gertrude Vicentini, placed herself under his spiritual direction.

"I came to know Vincent Pallotti (this nun testified in the Process) at San Silvestro in Capite, where I often invited him to say Mass; many times I made my confession to him and I often conferred with him on spiritual matters. The other nuns too used to take advantage of his presence in order to hear his holy words."

Another member of the community, a Mother Mary Veronica, recalled in the same Process Vincent's visit to San Silvestro in order to inscribe the nuns in the Society of the Catholic Apostolate, a ceremony which this nun described in these terms:

"I became acquainted with Vincent Pallotti when he came to San Silvestro to inscribe the nuns in the Society of the Catholic Apostolate; he preached a beautiful sermon in which he exhorted us to cooperate in the propagation of the Faith throughout the world."

When Blessed Vincent applied to the Mother Abbess in order to obtain leave to celebrate the Octave of the Epiphany in San Silvestro, he met at first with some coldness, as Mother Mary Gertrude relates in her evidence for the Process:

"When he sought permission... the Mother Abbess Moroni and other nuns made opposition and I have heard, made him some

---

[26] Life of Fr. Pallotti by Melia, p. 239.

sharp answers; but the Servant of God, without getting excited or impatient, withdrew to the cortile to pray, and later returned to the nuns and overcame every difficulty..."

The cortile here referred to is without doubt the cortile of the church. The Nun's Parlour, to which access was had from the church, was at that time situated in what is today the Sacred Heart chapel, which was divided into two spaces by a grating.

"The Octave (Mother Gertrude goes on to relate) was a great success and the nuns were so pleased that they requested that it should he held here in future years and the Mother Abbess presented to the Infant Jesus a silver crown."

The good nun gives us this little description of the Octave celebrations:

"I observed during the Octave that he was nearly always in church, during the day and the night; he used to read from the pulpit before the sermons and he worked very hard in the confessional and in the direction of the functions."

We may mention here that the present confessionals of San Silvestro are eighteenth-century pieces and in all probability are those which were used by Blessed Vincent.

There is still another reminiscence of Mother Gertrude which is worth recording.

"On one occasion the Servant of God made me a long and beautiful discourse on simplicity and the correct use of time, which I asked him to write out for me. He did so, and sent it, asking me to return it, but I succeeded in retaining it as a relic in memory of him."

This document was later handed in by her to the Postulator-General of the Cause. It has been published in *Collezione*, p. 123.

The events which led up to our acquisition of the church and house commence with the withdrawal of our Society from the Cento Preti Hospice. The first floor of this building had been granted to our Society, in perpetuity, in the year 1855, with the obligation of looking after the spiritual interests of the infirm inmates; it was here that for twenty years the students of our community were lodged. But in 1878 the Cardinal Vicar asked our Fathers to hand back those apartments,

which we promptly did, in a manner which compelled the gratitude of the Cardinal, who promised to bear us in mind.

Father Whitmee, after two years on the mission in London, was recalled to San Salvatore in Onda and appointed Bursar of that house. A dynamic young man, he found time, apart from the duties of his office, to attend a course of Canon and Civil Law in the Apollinare University, where he obtained the degree of Bachelor in those disciplines. It also occurred to him that courses of sermons in English for visitors and residents in Rome would fill a need and so he determined to use the church of San Salvatore for this purpose. They were not, of course, the first English sermons to be preached in Rome; from the time of Pius VII there had been regular courses of sermons in this language and very famous preachers, such as Cardinal Wiseman, had delivered them. Our Founder, as we have seen earlier, took care to include at least one English sermon in the Epiphany Octave right from the beginning. The regular courses of English sermons were usually scheduled in some church near the centre of the English residents, which at this time was the piazza di Spagna. The churches of St. Andrea delle Fratte, the Holy Trinity on the Via Condotti, the church of Jesus and Mary on the Corso, the church of Our Lady in Piazza del Popolo — all within easy reach of the piazza di Spagna — appear to have been the churches most frequently used for this purpose. There was a time, in the sixties and seventies, when a Mgr. O'Bryen was designated English Catholic Chaplain in Rome and it was his duty to organize these courses of sermons and attend at some church for the confessions of English-speaking Catholic visitors and residents.

In the month of August, 1882, the London Fathers, consulted by Fr. Whitmee, expressed their willingness to take over a church in Rome for English-speaking Catholics, should it be offered to them. We surmise that the church in view was San Silvestro, for, a few months later, the Father state that this church should be secured, if possible, for the purpose [27].

There lived in Rome at this time two notable English ecclesiastics: Cardinal Howard and Mgr. (later Archbishop) Stonor who became our patrons in this matter of securing San Silvestro for our community, to be used as the English-language church in the Eternal City. Cardinal Edward Henry

---

[27] Arch. Gen. Lond. Cons. Bk.

Howard was born in England in 1829 and was the grandson of the 12th Duke of Norfolk. After his education in Oscott he joined the Life Guards, from which corps he resigned in order to study for the Church, which he did in Rome, being ordained to the priesthood on the morning of the definition of the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception. In fulfillment of the wishes of Pope Pius IX he stayed in Rome, in the service of the Curia and in 1872 was consecrated archbishop. In 1877 he was created a Cardinal and in 1882, archpriest of St. Peter's, and, a year later was appointed Cardinal-Bishop of Frascati. He died in England in 1892. Archbishop Edmund Stonor was the younger son of Lord Camoys, educated in Oscott and Rome, where he was ordained in 1856. After some years of missionary work in England he returned to Rome, and was named Chaplain of the Papal Zouaves ,whom he attended during the various campaigns culminating in, and concluding with, the fall of Rome in 1870. Some years later he was appointed Canon of St. John Lateran, and in 1889 nominated Archbishop of Trebizond. He continued to live in Rome till his death in 1912. Father Whitmee enlisted the interest of these two powerful personages in the neglected state of the English-speaking residents in Rome, for whom he had begun to hold services in our church of San Salvatore at the end of 1883, the first sermon of that series being preached by Archbishop Ryan of St. Louis, U.S.A., on the 7th of December, 1883. But San Salvatore was far from what was then the centre of the English colony in Rome: San Silvestro would be much more suitable; and further, it was serving no useful purpose now that the nuns were gone from their ancient home.

Under the circumstances of the time there were two different authorities to be taken into account before San Silvestro could be secured for our Society: the Holy See and the Italian Government, and in the historical situation, they were mutually hostile. It was, possibly, in the negotiations with the ecclesiastical authorities where Fr. Whitmee's influential friends best helped him; in any case, there was outstanding a promise from the Roman Vicariate regarding a compensation for the withdrawal of our men from the Cento Preti. A petition was presented by our Society to the Holy See, via the Cardinal-Vicar, and in an Audience with the Holy Father, on the 21st of February, 1885, Pope Leo XIII granted us the church.

The issue then was clear from the ecclesiastical angle, but

the Government had still to be approached. The Law of Expropriation which governed the case of San Silvestro had been enacted on February 3rd, 1871, and shortly afterwards the Ministry of Public Works took over part of the building. The Cardinal Titular of the church was at the time Cardinal Matthieu, who put in a claim shortly afterwards for the use of the clergy-house attached to San Silvestro, but his claim was disallowed. On the 19th of June 1973, the Italian Parliament passed another law, which struck at the heart of Italian corporate religious life — the Law of Suppression of the Religious Congregations, in virtue of which the Italian Government took title to all properties vested in the suppressed communities. Under this Law, the church itself passed to the State. Cardinal Matthieu died in 1875 and his successor in the Title was Cardinal Ludovico Caverot who on the 25th of June, 1877 renewed the claim which his predecessor had made for the clerical apartments of San Silvestro. Once again the claim was disallowed, on the grounds that a Cardinalitial Title is merely titular. When, in 1884, Cardinal Caverot opted for the Title of the Trinità dei Monti the church of San Silvestro remained vacant, until Cardinal Vanutelli received it in 1891.

For part of the period between the removal of the Sisters and the commencement of our tenure, the church was under the care of a certain Don Acquisti, a priest from Forli, who, we presume, was named by the Italian Government to the post, as they held they were entitled to do as the 'legal' heirs of the suppressed congregations. The only mention of his activities we have been able to find is a short account of a Te Deum celebrated in the church in thanksgiving for the preservation of King Humbert from an attempt on his life in Naples at the end of 1883.

It is stated in the *Historia PSM* that Father Whitmee celebrated Mass for the first time in San Silvestro on the 8th of December, 1887; the implication being that he had been held up till about that date by the lack of the civil nomination to the rectorship. It would appear, however, that he obtained possession of it at the end of the preceding year. A correspondent in "The Tablet" writing under the date of January 1st, 1887, says the following:

> "You readers will be glad to learn that, through the zealous exertions of the Hon. and Rt. Reverend Mgr. Stonor, the Cardinal

---

[28] Historia PSM, p. 169.

Vicar of Rome has handed over, *in perpetuity*, to the religious congregation of the Pallottini, of which the Very Rev. Dr. Faa di Bruno is Rector-General, the very ancient church of San Silvestre in Capite, for the benefit of English-speaking Catholics, and under the express condition that English confessors shall always be found there." [29]

The same correspondent reports in the same newspaper a few weeks later that on Septuagesima Sunday, the course of Lenten sermons, preached by Fr. Peter Paul Mackey OP commenced in San Silvestro.

We have not been able to obtain a sight of the civil nomination of Fr. Whitmee to the Rectorship, but an article appearing in La Fanfulla, an anti-clerical Roman paper of the period, gives us a clue. In the issue of this organ under date of December 22nd. 1887, a long complain is made against the Government for appointing this English priest, Whitmee, to the Rectorship of San Silvestro. The same article conveys the information that Don Acquisti, the previous incumbent had passed away some time previously and goes on to suggest that the post should have been given to some poor but worthy Italian priest.

The extent of Archbishop's Stonor's intervention in these affairs is difficult to gauge, in the absence of direct testimony, but some idea of it may be hald from the reference just quoted, and from statements made on the occasion of his episcopal consecration.

"The Rector of San Silvestro was present at a reception in honour of the new Archbishop in the English College, and came to bear witness to Mgr. Stonor's struggles in favour of an English church in Rome." [31]

In the same journal, on the following week, the Archbishop is reported thus:

"Hih Grace then explained what had been done and what he wished to do in the interests of the English colony in Rome. The English church of San Silvestro was now secure, and the improvements nearly completed; that was a great step in the religious confort of the English in Rome." [32]

---

29 Tablet 1.1.87.
30 Ib. 13.2.89.
31 Ib. 2.3.89.
32 Ib. 9.3.89.

During the course of his long life, Archbishop Stonor maintained his interest in San Silvestro and bequeathed to it his valuable library, which is now housed in the section of the house which extends over the side-chapels of the church.

We will go on now to deal with two more foundations made by our Society in the eighties, whose origins are linked with the English-speaking Fathers of the community. These are Montevideo, in Uruguay, and Mercedes, in Argentina. The antecedents are as follows: — Fr. Whitmee, who had become the Procurator-General of the Society, went to South America in 1885, with the object of making arrangements on the spot for the acceptance of missionary work amongst Italian emigrants to Brazil, which was being urged on us by the Holy See. During the course of his visit he learned that an English family in Montevideo, the Jacksons, were building a church in honour of our Lady of Lourdes, which, as it was situated beside the port of Montevideo, they wished to place at the service of sailors in particular. They were, therefore, anxious to entrust it to a community of priests who would provide confessors who knew the principal European languages.

Fr. Whitmee visited the Jackson family and undertook to recommend to the superiors that the Pallottine Fathers should take charge of the church when completed.

Across the Plate from Montevideo, stands the mighty city of Buenos Aires, capital of the Argentine Republic. The city is placed at the edge of the great plain known as the Pampas, a treeless track of land several hundreds of miles long and wide, which is amongst the most fertile stretches of soil in the world, the home today of emigrants and their descendants from everywhere on earth. Irishmen had been flocking to the Plate and the pampas for many years, previous even to the independence of the country, in whose revolutionary struggles several distinguished Irish soldiers and sailors had taken part. The Irish potato famines of the forties and the trouble of the Land League days, which provoked the great migrations of the Celts across the North Atlantic, drove some of them South as well, where they settled and made homes for themselves on the plains of the Pampas. Priests of their own race crossed the Southern Ocean to look after them; mostly secular priests, under the leadership of a great Irish Dominican, Father Anthony Dominic Fahy, who organized a peculiar institution, known as the Irish Chaplaincies.

CHAPTER VI

Monsignor Ussher, the historian of the Irish Chaplaincies of Argentina has related how, after the death of Father Fahy in 1871, it became difficult to recruit Irish secular priests in order to keep the chaplaincies manned. It was a situation which provoked distress amongst many thousands of Irish people, scattered here and there through the Republic, and the ecclesiastical authorities felt bound to seek a remedy. The ideal solution, they felt, was to find a Religious Congregation which could gradually take over the Chaplaincies. Continuity and permanence would thus be secured. In this sense, the Archbishop of Buenos Aires wrote to the Holy See in 1879.

> "The number of Irish in this Province is about 28,000 and they are scattered over a surface of about 7,400 leagues; by reason of the pastoral life which they lead, the families live at a considerable distance from one another. This is a great difficulty in the way of their spiritual assistance, although ten Irish priests are engaged in it. Missions are most necessary in the camp, in order that the people may be instructed in the faith and taught to practice its most holy precepts. It is necessary also to provide for the education of the rising generation of both sexes. If there can be found in Ireland a religious community of men who dedicate themselves to missions and education, by sending three or four of them here at once, we can immediately begin the holy work. In case it should be difficult to find a Congregation which devotes itself simultaneously to missions and education, it would be well to procure members of two different communities, the one specially for missions, the other for schools." [1]

After finishing his work in Montevideo, Father Whitmee resolved to pay a visit to Buenos Aires. The date of his visit and its purpose may be gathered from this extract from the Irish newspaper of Buenos Aires, "The Southern Cross."

> "The Rev. Father William Whitmee of the Order of the Pious Society of Missions has just come to this country for the purpose of collecting funds for the founding of a college to be erected in

---

[1] Story of the Irish in Argentina, by Thomas Murray. New York, 1919.

Rome and dedicated to St. Patrick. The Order to which Father Whitmee belongs is occupied in the great work of giving missions to unbelievers all over the world and there are many Irish missionaries in the Order. The Order of the PSM has been despoiled of all its effects by the cruel and unscrupulous Italian Government. We strongly recommend to our readers the mission of Father Whitmee. We are informed that he proposes establishing a branch of his order in this country in order to teach school. This would indeed be a laudable project and we hope Father Whitmee will see his way to its accomplishment." [2]

About sixty miles from the city of Buenos Aires lies the city of Mercedes, which at this time was the centre of a considerable Irish colony, with a resident Irish Chaplain, a Father (later Monsignor) Samuel O'Reilly. There was in Mercedes an abandonend conventual building, which had been erected to serve as a boarding shool under the care of the Irish Sisters of Mercy, who, after a few years, withdrew from it. The building served for a short time as a barracks during the Revolution of the '80 and later the Irish Chaplain lived in it, merely in order to keep out intruders, for his intention was to hand it over to some community which could use it for educational purposes. It is clear that Father O'Reilly approached Father Whitmee with this offer, for the latter, very shortly after his arrival in this country, wrote to Rome suggesting that the Pallottines should take it over for a boarding school. What his plans were, and the work he was doing, can be gathered from a letter which he wrote to Dr. Faa di Bruno on August 22nd. 1885:

> "I am now collecting in what is called the camp and am about 150 miles in the interior from Buenos Aires. I have to travel sometimes about fifty miles a day either on horseback or in a carriage or cart from house to house of the Irish sheepfarmers. They always take me in for the night and send me on to the next place perhaps five or six leagues distant, making many rounds to all the houses on our way. The camp is one vast meadow, the smallest farm having about 10,000 sheep... I have to make many long and weary journeys and I am making our Congregation known and am preparing the way for the fathers for the school which I spoke of in my last letter. They are all anxious here for us to come... Many persons have promised to send their sons to us and several have promised to assist us... Next year is time enough for us to come here say April if possible." [3]

---

[2] The Southern Cross, Buenos Aires 24.7.85.
[3] Mercedes Archives, Carpeta PSM.

Before the end of the year Father Whitmee returned to Rome. It was there decided that the Society should accept the foundations in Brazil, Uruguay and Argentina and that personnel should be sent as soon as possible to take over the new foundations. Previous to the main expedition, Frs. Whitmee, Bannin and Feeney arrived in Argentina at the end of June of the year 1886. Their presence in Argentina is thus chronicled in "The Southern Cross."

> "We have much pleasure in welcoming to this country Frs. Whitmee, Bannin and Feeney of the Pious Society of Missions. They come to see if it be advisable to start a superior school in this city and to make themselves generally useful to the Irish community. The Dean is most anxious to establish an orphanage for Irish boys and hopes that these good fathers will be able to take charge of it..." [4]

The Dean to whom reference is made in that extract, was the Dean of the Cathedral of Buenos Aires, Mgr. Patrick Dillon, an Irish priest who was the senior Irish Chaplain in the country and possessed much influence amongst his countrymen. The erection of an Irish Orphanage, which the Dean is described as "most anxious to establish" was a cherished unfulfilled project of Father Fahy, most famous of all the Irish Chaplains of Argentina.

Whilst arrangements for taking over the derelict college in Mercedes were being completed, the three Pallottine Fathers were invited by Father O'Reilly, the Irish Chaplain, to preach Jubilee Missions in the chapels under his jurisdiction: Kilallen Chapel, Mercedes parish church, Duggan's Chapel, Chivilcy parish church.

In the announcement of the missions it was stated that they would make use of this opportunity "to confer with the principal inhabitants about the establishment of a middle class school." These missions were undertaken in the month of July, 1886. Some time during that month a final decision was arrived at, for in "The Southern Cross" of August we read:

> "The excellent work of the Mission Fathers is progressing. The building in Mercedes will be thoroughly repaired next month — a work which is absolutely necessary to preserve the edifice from utter ruin. The necessary funds are already promsied. After a year or two a farm will be taken and a branch school erected to teach

---

[4] S.C. 25.6.86.

agriculture. In the meantime the good work will be commenced in Mercedes and we say: God speed it. Father Feeney confidently expects that he will be in a position to open the school in Mercedes at the beginning of the coming year."

While these things were being done Father Faa di Bruno had collected a number of priests, students and brothers to staff the new houses. The expedition sailed from Genoa at the beginning of July; some of its members for Brazil, some for Uruguay and some for Argentina. Possession of the Montevideo house was taken at the end of August, the first Superior being Father Vincent Kopf, who had been sent from London for this purpose. The record of the foundation is drawn up in English and it is signed, among others, by Father John J. Petty and Br. John Dolan.

Father Bernard Feeney was appointed first Rector of the Mercedes college and Father John J. Petty and Br. Dolan joined him there on September 3rd. 1886. Pallottine community life thus commenced from that day in Argentina.

The building which housed them consisted of a two storey edifice, solidly constructed but in bad repair with a frontage of some thirty metres to the street. This building is still in exxistence. In the plot of land at the back of this edifice, a tumbledown brick room stood by itself in the midst of a neglected garden.

The legal owners of this property were the Irish Sisters of Mercy, who had removed to Australia some years earlier. Their local representatives could no longer act in their name for one of the Sisters whose name figured in the title deeds had died in Australia and the power of attorney had, according to Argentine law, lapsed. Father Whitmee's suggestion that until this could be rectified, the Fathers would rent the building, was accepted. When this temporary arrangement was terminated, Fathers Bannin and Whitmee returned to Europe and Father Feeney set about raising funds and planning the future of the college.

Father Feeney's plans were made known to the public by means of a prospectus which he prepared and circulated. "The Southern Cross" refers to this prospectus in the following terms:

"It will be remembered that the College consists of two departments, the paying and the non-paying. The former will be opened on the 7th January next and the Superiors, while giving all necessary attention to the backward pupils, will aim at nurturing and develop-

ing individual talent and directing it to those professions and pursuits for which it is best adapted and by which it may more surely attain success in life. The age of admission will be from ten to sixteen and the pension $ 20 monthly. The non-paying department is already opened for a limited amount of children who have lost one or both parents. These children will be allowed three hours daily for study and school classes and during the remainder of the day will be engaged at some trade to which they must be apprenticed by their guardian. The total number of children in this department cannot for some time exceed 40..." [5]

From all this it is quite clear that Father Feeney was attempting to combine two projects: an ordinary boarding school and an industrial school for orphans. His premises were rented and he had to secure his equipment by collecting money from the Irish families in the neighbourhood. He was an enterprising man, for in the space of five months he had gathered six thousand, seven hundred pesos, refitted the buildings and commenced the industrial side of his project. His main difficulty was how to combine in one the two projects; he was, in fact, to fail in his endeavour, as the story will tell.

The tumbledown room in the garden was turned into a chapel and was ready for use when the first school year — 1887 — opened at the end of February. It was solemnly blessed on St. Patrick's day by Father Bernard Feeney and the ceremony was followed by High Mass officiated by Father Petty. The sermon was preached by Mgr. Dean Dillon who commenced by saying that he was assisting at this ceremony in Mercedes, in preference to other places, because the occasion had a triple significance; the opening of a chapel, the commencement of the scholastic year in the new college and industrial school, and the feast of the Apostle of Ireland. The newspaper account of the event relates that:

> "The sermon, which lasted over an hour, was listened to with the greatest attention and satisfaction by a huge congregation not only of persons of the district of Mercedes, but also from Suipacha, Chivilcoy, Saladas, Navarro, Lujan, Las Heras and the Metropolis." [6]

It was announced on this occasion that a Mr. Cunningham, an Irish resident in Buenos Aires, had decided to donate a plot of land in the town of Azcuenaga, to the Pallottine com-

---

[5] Ib. 3.12.86.
[6] Ib. 29.3.87.

munity for the purpose of installing there the industrial school which was operating side by side with the ordinary school in St. Patrick's.

> "The college in Mercedes (it was stated) will be solely for boys whose parents wish to give them a first class education — it will in fact be a High School. The profits of this establishment, if there be any, will be used to support the industrial school."

Somewhere or other Father Bernard Feeney got hold of a fount and a printing press and the boys of the industrial department of St. Patrick's College were set to work in the production of a monthly magazine, under the title "Flowers and Fruit" which ran for twelve numbers. This was the first Pallottine periodical publication in the history of our Society, if we except the yearly Calendar which Father Melia published in the Italian language in London in the year 1847, and a yearly Almanach which was published in the same city in the early eighties.

The difficulty of conducting an industrial and an ordinary school under one roof and a single staff soon proved insuperable. The village of Azcuenaga, where Mr. Cunningham's donation awaited us, is distant some twenty-five miles from Mercedes and owed its origin to a railway station which had recently been established there. This was the period in the development of Argentina when it seemed that every railway station erected on the pampas would become the centre of a flourishing township. Father Feeney and his colleagues came to the conclusion that it would be best to take the industrial school from Mercedes to this place. We have not seen any record of the date when the separation took place but is was apparenly before the end of the school year of 1887, for there is no mention of the activities of the industrial school in the report of the year's work in St. Patrick's College, Mercedes, which bears the date of December 15th. 1887.

Father Bernard Feeney took over the Azcuenaga venture and removed thither his printing press, as we learn from this extract from "The Southern Cross."

> "This country, will soon be honoured by the appearance of another English newspaper, to be called 'The Irish Argentine'... printed and published in the rapidly progressing town of Azcuenaga. We hear that a large sum of money will be spent in initiating this patriotic enterprise. The new journal will be under the patronage and direction of the Pious Order of Missions (sic) and there is

therefore every reason to believe that it will be a strenuous defender of Catholicism as well as Irish and Argentine interests. The Rev. Bernard Feeney, Superior of the Order, came into town last week and we are informed that he was very successful in canvassing for advertisements. The Pious Order of Missions has received very large donations for the establishment of an industrial school in this country..." [7]

We therefore conclude that at some time near the end of 1887 Father Feeney accompanied his industrial school to Azcuenaga. In March 1888 Father John J. Petty succeeds him in the position of Rector of St. Patrick's College, Mercedes.

The Azcuenaga industrial school had a short life. "It is not" a correspondent contemporary account states" a very pretentious building, but it is only commencing to strike its roots into the ground." Father Feeney collected twenty-five boys and set them to learn various trades, carpentering, shoe making, tailoring and printing. The newspaper to which allusion was made above, "The Irish Argentine" was duly produced on the premises. It ceased to appear in March 1889, shortly before Father Feeney withdrew from Argentina.

The industrial school at Azcuenaga (perhaps the first of its kind in the Country) lasted a little over a year. Early on Father Feeney discovered that he could not run it single handed and as no help could be expected from the community, he sought outside assistance.

"The Irish Argentine in an issue of May 1888 announces that Father Feeney has written to the Irish Christian Brothers asking them to take charge of St. Brigid's Industrial School (for this was the name given it after its separation from St. Patrick's College). He will retain the spiritual direction of the College and the editorship of this paper." [8]

His efforts were fruitless and finally the school was closed and Father Feeney returned to Italy.

During a visit to Rome he met the Archbishop of Oregon, U.S.A. and was invited by him to go to that country, where he was appointed a professor in the major Seminary of Mount Angel. Three years later he left Oregon and was appointed professor in St. Mary's Seminary, Cincinnati. He later engaged in parish work and in 1900, with the approval of the Archbish-

---

[7] Ib. 6.1.88.
[8] Ib. 29.3.89.

op of Cincinnati, he because a novice in the Benedictine community of Mount Angel, the scene of his earliest labours in the U.S.A. His health did not permit him to continue in the monastery and after a year's trial he returned to parish work, this time in the diocese of Sioux Falls. A year later, in 1902, he became a professor and Spiritual Director of St. Paul's Seminary in the city of St. Paul's. He retained these posts till advancing age and dimming vision compelled him to resign in 1917. Two years later he returned to his native place, with the intention of spending some time with his surviving relatives. Some weeks after his arrival in his old home he fell ill and on September 7th 1919, he passed away. He was seventy five years of age at his death, and had been a priest for fifty two years. The long path, which had led him to England, to Italy, to Argentina and the United States, finally brought him back to the spot where he was born. [9]

Besides the works which he composed while a member of our Society, Father Feeney produced four more works: "How to Get On" in 1891, which went through four editions; "Manual of Sacred Rhetoric, or, How two Prepare a Sermon;" in 1900, two editions; "The Catholic Sunday School" in 1907; "The Ideal Seminary" published posthumously in 1923.

This writer remembers reading, many years ago, a novel of clerical life in which certain place-names, such as Felizzano and Masio led him to suppose that it was written by someone who at one time or another had been an inmate of our College in Masio. The author's name was concealed under a pseudonym but the late Mgr. Gearty, of San Antonio de Areco, Argentina, in whose library the book was kept, claimed that it was written by Fr. Bernard Feeney. In 1961 this writer visited Dublin and inquired from the managers of Gill's great publishing business, whether they had any records of Fr. Feeney's transactions with the firm, which had published some of his earlier books. The answer was affirmative: the firm had paid royalties on several works to Fr. Feeney, and amongst them, for a work published under a pseudonym. The firm did not possess copies of this work but indicated that it might be found in the Dublin National Library. Here are its particulars: George Evans Priest and Millionaire/An Autobiography/Edited by/Bryan O'Dowd M.D. Dublin

---

[9] Reverend Bernard Feeney, by Mgr. James Michael Reardon, Minneapolis, Minn. 1956.

/M.G. Gill and Son, Ltd/1908/pp. 309. It is a tale about an American student who becomes a convert and finally a priest, written with some humour. It belongs, therefore to the bibliography of Fr. Feeney, and to some extent, to the literary/history of our Society.

Fr. Feeney was a man, therefore, of literary parts and a successful writer. "A faithful friend, a scholarly and examplary priest" is the characterization of the distinguished prelate who knew him throughout his American career and wrote the sketch of his life we quoted earlier. Towards the end of his life Father Feeney expressed the wish to take up his abode in one of the houses of the Society of the Catholic Apostolate. Circumstantial reasons did not permit the realization of this desire which found favour amongst his old companions in the Society.
After his death it was made known that he had bequeathed portions of the little estate he had accumulated throughout the years to all the Pallottine houses where he had ministered; namely, the Italian Church, Masio, and St. Patrick's College, Mercedes.

The Father John J. Petty who succeeded Father Feeney as Rector of Mercedes was a native of England, who had joined our Society in London, was sent to Masio for his ecclesiastical studies and when these were finished, transferred to Argentina. When Father Petty became Rector, the community consisted of three members; himself, Br. John Dolan and Br. William Ball, a laybrother, who withdrew a short time later. They were joined almost immediately by two candidates for the priesthood who wished to join our Society. One of them was a Mr. Thomas Stanton, a clerical student from the United States who had originally been attached to the Passionist Congregation but had withdrawn from it for reasons of health. He was far advanced in his clerical studies. The other was Mr. Ernest Moultrie, a middle-aged Englishman, an Old Etonnian, former midshipman in the Royal Navy, camp schoolmaster, somewhat of a poet, convert to Catholicism. Thomas Stanton was ordained to the priesthood in the Cathedral of Buenos Aires on April 13th 1889; the first citizen of the United States as far as we know, ever to be ordained priest amongst us. He did not however remain long with us. Under the rules of the association which then obtained, it was possible for members to withdraw from the organization by giving timely notice and engaging to serve in some diocese as a secular priest.

This was the course selected by Father Stanton some eighteen months after his ordination and thus he disappears from our history, except for the briefest of notices, some thirty years later, that he had died in New York, near which city he held some ecclesiastical appointment.

Just before Father Stanton's ordination, another event took place which was destined to have many consequences in the history of the college. This was the arrival of Father Patrick O'Grady. His coming was announced in the "Southern Cross" in the following terms:

> "The Rev. Patrick O'Grady of the Pious Society of Missions has arrived in this country, having come directly from Rome to join the other members of his community in St. Patrick's College. We understand that Father O'Grady is an ardent Irish Nationalist who has borne his share of suffering for love of country and like a true Irish priest he now follows his countrymen to this distant land with a hope of being useful to them and ministering to their necessities." [10]

Father Patrick O'Grady was an elderly man who had recently been ordained to the priesthood. A native of Murroe, Co. Limerick he was born in 1828, the year before Catholic Emancipation in Ireland. There was an uncle who formed part of the Franciscan Brotherhood in Mount Bellew, Galway, which was devoted to education. Patrick O'Grady followed his uncle into the Brotherhood, went through the training and in 1868 was elected Superior of the Community. He was re-elected continuously till his withdrawal in 1882 for the purpose of studying for the priesthood. During his career in Mount Bellew, Patrick O'Grady became involved in a heated controversy which was ventilated in the courts. The Brotherhood for many years had conducted an elementary school near their monastery but had to close it; later they opened an agricultural college attached to the Monastery. This activity provoked some hostility, including an anonymous attack in the course of a correspondence in a local newspaper. Patrick O'Grady, acting for the Brotherhood, took legal action and the case went for trial to the Four Courts, Dublin. He won the action, but refused to accept damages more extensive than a farthing. The Court was crowded by his supporters during the case and at its conclusion he was cheered and carried from the room on the shoulders of the crowd. There was, it seems, some agrarian

---

[10] S.C. 5.4.89.

angle in the case which lifted it to the category of a nationalist issue.

After his withdrawal from the Brotherhood Patrick O'Grady got in touch with the Pallottine Fathers and was sent to their college in Rome, where he made his studies. He achieved ordination in Masio, Northern Italy and was sent to Argentina, where he arrived at the date given above.

There is a curious sequel to the libel action in which Patrick O'Grady won the plaudits of his supporters. Fifteen years after that event a man presented himself one day at the door of the Mount Bellew Monastery, asked for the Superior, and when this functionary appeared, prostrated himself on the door step and asked the pardon of the astonished Brother. He then explained that he was under an injunction from a religious superior in England to do this for he had had some responsibility for the appearance of the anonymous letter in the Press which had led to the libel action mentioned above. Refusing all hospitality, in accordance with his instructions, he departed. Some belated qualm of conscience, disclosed to some Superior with a stern sense of justice? Father O'Grady retained a great affection for his former companions and on at least one occasion, while he was studying in Rome, was of material service to his old Brotherhood, this time in an issue which seemed destined to provoke canonical litigation.

Coincident with our foundation in Argentina that country found itself in the throes of a vast inflation, whose effect made itself felt even on the fortunes of our modest effort, as is shown by the Rector's statement at the Annual Prize-Day, which took place on December 15th. 1889:

> "The Superior of the College mentioned that the College was at a great loss from the depreciation of paper money and in future would be obliged to receive payment on a gold basis..."

The burden of administering the finances and ruling the establishment was to prove too heavy for Father Petty. Father Patrick O'Grady, with a long experience in management of schools and religious communities was therefore chosen to take his place and the change was effected sometime in the early part of 1890.

The Pallottine community in Mercedes received a welcome recruit in the month of July at that year, in the person of Father Augustine Gough, recently ordained at the Pallottine

training college in Rome. He was one of seven missionaries sent forth simultaneously; the others were distributed in the Brazilian, Uruguayan and Chilean missions of the Community and Mercedes fell to the lot of Augustine Gough and here he arrived a few days before the '90 Revolution broke out in the city of Buenos Aires.

Early in 1890 the Archbishop of Santiago, capital of the Republic of Chile, approached our fathers in Rome, with the request that they should take over a recently-built church in the city of Valparaiso in that country. Valparaiso was still one of the great ports of the world, for the Panama Canal had not yet been made and all the traffic of the West Coast of the Americas faring to and from Europe was forced to pass near this beatiful harbour. The city, built on the ring of hills which surround the port is intensely picturesque, and, since independence days, a considerable colony of British and Americans have lived in or about Valparaiso; traders, bankers and representatives of the great shipping companies. Some of these were, and others became, Catholics and they longed for priests of their own language. Herbert (later Cardinal) Vaughan stayed for a time among them in the sixties, when he was collecting funds for St. Joseph's Missionary Society. His brother Kenelm, the great wanderer, stayed here for a couple of years in the earl seventies and returned several times in the course of his journeyings. Et was from here that Kenelm Vaughan began his overland journey on horseback to Buenos Aires, across the Andes, in September of 1879; the last, and the least known, of the Victorian travellers.

In 1885, and again in 1886, a certain Father Savino, a French Vincentian Father who spoke English fluently, preached missions in that language to the English-speaking residents of Valparaiso and the idea was mooted that they should build themselves a church to be served by English-speaking priests. Some money was collected in Chile and in Europe for this purpose and Father Savino succeeded in interesting the famous Passionist Superior, Father Fidelis Kent Stone. The principal patrons of the project were the Edwards family. Mr. Arthur Edwards purchased on the 24th February, 1886, the plot of land where the church now stands — high up on the hill known as the Cerro Alegre, which looks out over the Bay of Valparaiso. In November of the same year the site on which the house was erected was similarly purchased by Mr. Edwards. The plans for

church and house were drawn in accordance with the instructions of Father Fidelis and the whole was completed in two years. The church itself was blessed on September 8th 1888.

During the course of the construction, Father Fidelis came to the conclusion that the ministry which was expected of the Fathers would not be in accordance with the apostolate proper to his congregation and in consequence the Passionists withdrew from the project. The invitation to succeed them was then made to us and accepted.

Father Alfred Meager, from the London community, was appointed the first Pallottine Rector of the church of St. Aloysius, Valparaiso, where he arrived towards the end of August, 1890, having come by sea from Montevideo. He was accompanied by Father John J. Petty, late Rector of Mercedes. The latter stayed only a few months in Valparaiso and then returned to Buenos Aires, where he accepted at the beginning of 1891, an appointment as English speaking Chaplain for that city and his connection with our Society ceased.

Except for two intervals, Father Petty spent the rest of his life in Argentina. A man of apostolic impulses he founded and conducted for several years a Catholic Day School in one of the poorest sections of Buenos Aires and at the same time served as Chaplain to the English Catholics of the city. In the month of August of the year 1896, the Archbishop of Buenos Aires under whose jurisdiction this parish then was, named Father Petty parish priest of Suipacha. He retained this post till the outbreak of the Boer War, in which conflict he volunteered his services as a Chaplain. The offer was accepted. Father Petty sailed for Capetown and remained in South Africa till the conclusion of hostilities. In 1905 he returned to Argentina, where he took up residence once more in Buenos Aires, in the home of a sister, who had come to this city from England many years earlier. After some time he was offered an ecclesiastical appointment in the Province of Buenos Aires, which he took up for a few years. On the outbreak of World War 1 he again volunteered as a Chaplain of the British Forces and sailed from Buenos Aires just after the commencement of hostilities, when the German Imperial raiders still infested the Atlantic sea lanes. We mention this detail because the ship on which he sailed was reported sunk and a Buenos Aires newspaper carried a notice of the death of Father Petty at sea! He was thus one of the few people who have had the pleasure of

reading their own obituary. When this conflict came to an end, Father Petty again returned to Buenos Aires and here he stayed till 1921, when, old and infirm, he resoved to retire finally to his native land. The evening before he sailed he died quite suddenly. His remains rest in the vault of the Cross and Passion Confraternity of the city where he lived so long.

Father Petty's place in Valparaiso was taken by Father Charles Gissler, who was later to become Rector General of the Society. Father Gissler arrived in April, 1891 and found the country in the throes of revolution, the house on the Cerro Alegre closed and Father Meager residing with the Picpus Fathers. They proceeded to reopen the house whilst the decisive naval and military engagements, which finally brought down the Government, were being fought in the neighbourhood of the city. Finally, the situation became too much for Father Meager, who resolved to return to Europe; he was replaced in February 1892 by Faher Lorie.

While these events were taking place on the West Coast of South America, the fortunes of the Mercedes community were prospering. The ecclesiastical studies of Messrs, Dolan and Moultrie came to a successful conclusion at the end of 1890 and on January 25th 1891 they were ordained to the priesthood by the Archbishop of Buenos Aires at Moron. These priests were connected with the College for several years and when called away to serve their community in other parts of the world, left it with regret and affection. Their subsequent distinguished careers did honour to the training which they had received under trying conditions.

The college was now competently staffed and the financial problems had been solved. But the Society of the Catholic Apostolate has been endowed from its beginnings (or should the word be: afflicted?) with a certain centrifugal tendency which makes it anxious to do as much of the work in sight as it can embrace, without limiting itself to any special task in the apostolate. It will conduct schools when and where this is necessary, take over parishes where there are no other priests to fill them, assist in the training of lay leaders where the ecclesiastical authorities entrust it with this task, teach the sacred sciences where called upon, edit Catholic newspapers and literature where this is desirable and possible — a Catholic apostolate in a very ample sense.

Now the nineties were a period of low ebb for Argentine

Catholicism. Recruits for the clergy were few; the population was expanding and many hostile influences were hard at work to drive the Church into a corner from which it might not emerge. The Archbishop of Buenos Aires was at the time the spiritual leader, not only of the great and growing city, but of the vast Province of Buenos Aires as well, with scores of towns and new settlements constantly in process of formation. In September 1891 the Archbishop visited St. Patrick's College, Mercedes and made two proposals to the Fathers.

One of these dealt with the situation arising from several vacancies in the Irish Chaplaincies in the Province of Buenos Aires which no longer had Irish priests to fill them, for the original chaplains had died or old age had compelled them to retire. Would the fathers of Mercedes take over the chaplaincies of Lobos, Monte, Saladillo, Marcos Paz and Las Heras? This meant attendance in the churches of these places on stated Sundays, an occasional Mission and the obligation to be on call for attendance on the sick. If you take a map of the Province of Buenos Aires and mark the location of he places we have menioned above, and if at the same time, you inform yourself of the means of communication existing at the time, you will come to the conclusion that these Irish Chaplaincies were to entail a great deal of week-end and other travelling for the Mercedes priests.

The second proposal was that the priests of St. Patrick's should take over an unfinished and abandoned church in the outskirts of Mercedes, fit it up for divine worship and conduct services there for that section of the city. Mercedes had at this time a large Italian population, particularly in the environs of the city and some of these people had banded together, collected funds and supplied labour for the erection of a church, which they wished to dedicate to St. Aloysius. This had happened in the early eighties and before the building could be finished, sharp divergences had developed, accompanied by "angry recriminations" as a contemporary account states. "It is said that the people on their side wanted to divide the town, making a part of it into a parish attached to this church. In this they could not succeed. And on the other side a demand was made that before opening the church, a stipend should be guaranteed for an assistant priest to celebrate Mass in it." The committee under whose auspices the church had been erected approached the Archbishop when he was visiting Mercedes at

the date mentioned above and suggested that the church should be handed over to the priests of St. Patrick's. Otherwise, they told the prelate, the hot-heads of the district were resolved to convert the unfinished building into a dance hall.

It happened that coincident with the Archbishop's visit to Mercedes, Father William Whitmee, now Procurator-General of the Society, was on visitation in Mercedes. The archiepiscopal proposals were dealt with on the spot and the issue was favourable on both counts . The committments of the little community were suddenly made much greater and the Pallottine Fathers became responsible for several thousand souls, where before they had no obligations beyond the portals of the College itself. San Luis Church was taken over and on September 20th 1891 Father William Whitmee celebrated the First Mass in the building.

The fabric of the unfinished church was in a lamentable condition when the Pallottine Fathers took over. In a contemporary newspaper it is described as a "leaky mildewed barn." It had to be ceiled, plastered, the walls bound together, the roof repaired. Altars, pews, doors, windows and other fittings had to be supplied. The tower had o be erected and supplied with bells. These repairs and additions were partially obtained from funds provided by the community and from subscriptions which the got from their friends and benefactors. The total work of renovation took several years. It may be said to have come to an end finally on February 4th 1896 when Bishop Espinosa, Auxiliary to the Archbishop of Buenos Aires, blessed the new High Altar. Meanwhile the Pallottines attended the church with unfailing regularity; Sunday sermons were preached in English, Spanish and Italian for the various national groups attending the church.

San Luis church continued in the possession of the Fathers of St. Patrick's from 1891 till May 1904. The ecclesiastical authorities then decided to demolish the ancient parish church which stood in the centre of the city in order to erect a new building on the site. It was thought that the new church would be finished in a couple of years; in consequence the Bishop of La Plata (a bishopric which had been erected a few years previously) requested our Fathers to place the church of San Luis at his disposal until the new church was erected and undertook to return it to us when that event took place.

The parish church of Mercedes was almost twenty years building. When it was at last completed, the Fathers applied

for the return of San Luis, in accordance with the undertaking of the former Bishop. To their surprise and pain, their reasonable request was turned down. The early Fathers had assumed the care of San Luis Church without other formalities than a verbal agreement with the competent authority. Verbal agreements usually stand while those who made them are alive to bear witness to the value of their words — and not always even then. Comes a new generation which knows not Joseph and juridical proofs are called for and documents requested which may not be forthcoming. This is what happened to the Pallottine Fathers when the question of the ownership of San Luis Church was juridically examined by the Holy See.

Concurrently with the renovation of San Luis Church, Father Patrick O'Grady and his community concerned themselves with enlarging the College and building a new college chapel, which was commenced in the early part of the year 1892.

> "The new chapel which is being built in connection with St. Patrick's College, Mercedes, will be 81 feet long and 27 wide. We understand that when the building is finished the religious services held therein will be open to the public. The chapel, however, is only temporary and will be replaced in a few years by a large church." [11].

This happened, eventually, but more than forty years were to pass before this "temporary" chapel was finally replaced. At this period too, the plot of land in front of the entrance to the college was purchased. "The place" it was stated "will be used for cricket, football and other athletic sports".

Let us return now to the story of the central house in London - the Italian Church, which in one way or another, had been involved in the new foundations which had been made in so many parts of the wold. After Father Kirner's appointment to New York, Father Crescitelli was appointed Rector of St. Peter's, London, but after a few weeks he resigned. In his place Father Joseph Bannin was named and he continued to guide the destinies of the house till his death in 1915. In time he became a prominent figure in the public life of Catholic London, respected, consulted and followed in most of the issues which faced the Church during the period.

The first instance of Father Bannin coming before the public eye, that we know of, concerns an appeal which he

---

[11] Ib. 15.4.92.

made through the columns of The Tablet on behalf of an indigent historian. His appeal was headed "A Martyr of History" and he wrote as follows:

> "It is not given to many men to write history and to fewer still to write history well. When then a Catholic has earned such success, it seems terribly hard that he should fall a victim to so praiseworthy a cause. This, however, is the case with the author of these masterly vigorous 'Historical Portraits of the Tudor Dynasty' and 'Men and Women of the Reformation' etc. Advanced in age, Mr. S. Herbert Burke has sacrificed the best part of a vigorous lifetime in raking out the truth of that most critical period of English history miscalled the Reformation. He alone of all contemporary historians has thrown the most light on that dark subject... His works well deserve to have merited for their author a literary pension, but where is the Catholic who has sufficient patronage to get it? They should have brought him through their publisher a handsome remuneration for his pains, had Catholics the zest for, or did they take the trouble to read history. Strange to say his writings, trenchant though they are against Protestantism, have been more sought after by Protestants than by his co-religionists and could merit an encomium from Mr. Gladstone... As Mr. Burke lives in my parish, I must in duty raise my voice on his behalf. In the last stages of poverty, his clothes in pawn, rent unpaid for months and saved only from starvation by the little the priests can give, Mr. Burke's career must soon close unless something be done to make his increasing years more comfortable..." [12]

A considerable sum of money was at once subscribed to ease the unhappy situation of Mr. Burke. Through Father Bannin's efforts, he was admitted to the Italian Hospital where he ended his days some weeks after this intervention on his behalf.

Mention of the Italian Hospital leads us to set down that this institution was founded in 1883 by the Commendatore Ortelli, on old friend and benefactor of the Italian Church Signor Ortelli had earned a large fortune in London by importing Italian cheeses and he was moved to found the hospital by observing the distress which some of his countrymen, ignorant of the language, had to suffer in the ordinary hospitals of the city. Signor Ortelli was encouraged and supported in his efforts by the Fathers of the Italian Church, who became the chaplains of the institution soon after its foundation. Collections for its support were frequently taken up at the church, though, in view of the anticlerical attitudes of the Italian Governments

---

[12] Tablet 1.9.86.

at this time, which were imitated by the Italian officials in London it was stressed that there was no institutional connection between the Italian Church and the Italian Hospital.

Shortly after his appointment as Rector, Father Bannin set about renovating the decoration of the church which, as we saw above, had been considerably enlarged. This renovation was a large and costly task and was completed in May 1886. The Tablet thus describes the work on its conclusion:

"The decoration of the interior of St. Peter's Church, Hatton Garden, which has been carried out by two distinguished Italian artists, Signor Arnaud of Caraglio, in Piedmont, and Signor Gauthier of Saluzzo, has now been completed. The scheme, says the 'Journal of Decorative Art' has been inspired by and carried out according to the architectural dispositions of the building. Above the sanctuary a beautiful picture represents Paradise containing the figures of the Trinity, the Blessed Virgin, the Four Doctors of the Church, different Founders of religious orders, and other saints with angels offering up the prayers of the just in the form of incense rising from censers of gold. The apse over the high altar has for central decoration the Ascension of the Saviour, our Lord being represented in the act of giving his last Benediction to his Mother and the Apostles. On either side is represented the prophet Isaiah, his looks bent on our Lord; and the prophet Jeremiah seated on the ruins of the Temple and weeping over its destruction. Above, two bassorelievos depict Christ giving the Holy Communion to St. Peter and washing the feet of the Apostles, The apse of the Lady Chapel and St. Joseph's Chapel are divided into three parts, each representing angels bearing symbolic attributes. The groups of angels are painted in different shades of violet, ranging from the lightest tints almost to a purple and the architectural details are worked in grisaille in black and white, the distance from the spectator softening and subduing all crudities of colour. The ceiling of the nave has, in the centre, a magnificent composition representing St. Peter surrounded by angels carrying the emblems of his authority and his martyrdom. The other panels of the ceiling are also most richly decorated and the arches of the gallery have been filled in with delicate traceries and paintings representing incidents in the lives of St. Peter and St. Paul. In short, continues the 'Journal of Decorative Art' the whole of this decoration is very beautiful and we do not exaggerate in saying that when finished the interior of the Italian Church will be one of the most beautiful specimens of ecclesiastical decoration that the United Kingdom offers for our admiration. We therefore strongly recommend decorators to visit it; when it is completed we hope to give a sketch of the principal parts, with the indication necessary for those of our readers who live at a distance, to form an idea of the colours. The article concludes by noticing an innovation which cannot fail to interest decorators. On each side of the transept are two large windows meant to receive paintings on fine

linen in the semi transparent style, a process almost new in England." [13]

The gradual expansion of our Society threw into relief the office of General Superior and that of his councillors. In the earlier days, paucity of numbers had led to a curious arrangement by which the Rector General and two Councillors lived in Italy, and the other two Councillors in England. This arrangement was continued at the election to these offices which took place in September 1883. This election, which was conducted by ballot, through the post, gave as its result: Rector General: Dr. Faa di Bruno, Councillors: Fathers Crescitelli, Bannin, Whitmee and Orlandi; Procurator General: Father William Whitmee. Of this number, Fathers Crescitelli and Bannin continued to live in London.

Death came at last for Dr. Faa di Bruno on Good Friday of the year 1889. The end had not been unforseen, for he had made arrangements for the governement of the Society till an election could take place, as we learn from the Whitmee Correspondence preserved in the Mercedes Archives.

"Poor Father General, when he was dying, appointed me Vicar General till the next election (which according to the rule he had a right to do) but after he was dead I refused to accept the office, feeling that it would not be for the good of the Society." [14]

Don Carlo Orlandi, the last surviving companion of the Founder was chosen to hold office till a regular election could be held, which was done on January 22nd 1890, the ballots being once more remitted by post. The result was the appointment of Father Joseph Bannin. In view of the fact that he had not obtained an absolute majority of the votes, the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars decreed that he should be styled Vicar General instead of Rector General. The Councillors selected on this occasion were, with the exception of Father Dominic Crescitelli, all resident in Italy. Father Bannin was not present in Rome at the counting of the ballots and he was quite unwilling to accept the post on the grounds that he was not sufficiently skilled in the Italian language and that his experience of the Society was as yet too small for him to undertake so important a task. Father Bannin must have suspected that

---

[13] Ib. 15.5.86.
[14] Mercedes Arch. Whitmee Correspondence.

many members were considering him for the office, because he requested Father Arkell, who was in Rome when the balloting took place, to explain why it would be more prudent to select some one else; further, Father Bannin sent a telegram to this effect to the Roman house. These efforts were, however, fruitless.

Father Bannin came to Rome after his election, in order to take the necessary oath of office, a ceremony which took place on February 27th and then returned once more to London, from which place he published his first Circular Letter. This document, the first of its kind in our Society, bears the date of March 25th 1890. He refers, after greeting his brethren, to the marvellous increase of the membership of the Society in recent years, which he states "is due to the recently departed and lamented Dr. Faa di Bruno, who, by his virtues, his theological learning and his zeal in establishing the Masio College in 1878 has provided for the admirable and swift growth of our Society." The document then goes on to lament lack of fixed rules and points out that until 1856 the progress of the Society was uniform and that the discussions which then insued had been unfortunate. Father Bannin next declares that it is his intention to close the discussion by taking the Rule revised by Cardinal Lambruschini, which was employed by the Founder for three years before his death and was in 1851 presented to the Holy See; he proposes having this Rule, with the addition of appropriate Constitutions, printed and then presented to the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars for approval.

The Circular Letter then refers to the special nature of our Pallottine vocation. "Consider the high and most excellent end of our vocation; secular priests who, separated from the world, live under our rules in Retreats (for by this precious title did our Founder wish our houses to be known); placed in the Church of God between the regular and the secular clergy, in order to be a source of edification to both orders, to which we are bound by ties of humble charity and zeal."

Father Bannin then goes on to mention a few special points in our Rule of life which he considers of paramount importance. "Since our Venerable Founder attaches great importance to the office of Spiritual Father, whom he calls 'the soul of the community,' whoever holds this office must fulfill it by excelling in prayer, knowledge and good example, repeating to himself frequently the words of Holy Writ: 'Vinea mea coram me est.' Let

him arrange frequent public and private readings of the rule, hold private conferences with the students, be always ready with the assistance of another priest appointed by the Superior, to hear confessions and see to it that each member has a fixed confessor."

Father Bannin then asks that in all our churches thoughout the world, the Octave of the Epiphany should be celebrated every year. He then asks the prayers of all for the speedy beatification of our Founder and requests them to bear in mind too the Cause of the Servant of God, Elizabeth Sanna.

The Circular concludes with the list of appointments throughout the Society. Father Bannin retains for himself the rectorship of St. Pater's, London, where Father Monselle is appointed Vice-Rector; Father Orlandi in Rome is named Pro-Vicar General to act during Father Bannin's absences.

Father Bannin dealt very promptly with the first important affair mentioned in his Circular Letter, viz the printing of the Rule and Constitutions; two booklets with independently numbered pages but bound together. The first part must have been completed before July 1890, for, as will be seen later, Father Augustine Gough, who arrived in Argentina at the end of July of that year, was the bearer of printed copies of this 'Rule.'

Father John Weidner has shown that the authorship of these 'Rules and Constitutions' has been wrongly vested in Don Carlo Orlandi and affirms categorically that the author or compiler, is unknown.[15] We suggest that the published text of 1890 may well be the result of the labours of that Commission which was set up in London on April 22nd 1884, composed by Fathers Faa di Bruno, Whitmee and Carmody, in order to draft the Rules, as we saw above.

Father Bannin envisaged a practical acceptation of these 'Rules and Constitutions' by the use of moral suasion. Writing to Father Patrick O'Grady in Mercedes he mentions that Father Gough is the bearer of the printed copy of the 'Rule' and then goes on to say:

> "The second part (i.e. the 'Constitutions') will very soon follow. From these you will learn how to guide yourself, as regards these under and above you; should the circumstances and customs of the country be such that some of the rules do not quite work, I leave it to your own good judgment and common sense to dispense temporarily until you shall have communicated the nature of the

---

[15] Acta SAC, III, p. 589.

case to me and received my decision. I am strongly of the opinion that when you can do so the rules should be put in force, and as far as can be, carried out. So much depends upon this, both to attain the blessing of Heaven and our Founder's help in our work and success in our undertakings." [16]

During the interregnum between the death of Dr. Faa di Bruno and the appointment of Father Bannin, the Society was offered, and accepted, a portion of missionary territory in the German Colony of Cameroon in West Africa. In order to staff this mission it became necessary to open a house of recruitment in Germany. A first attempt to locate it in Bavaria failed owing to the refusal of the civil authorities of that state to grant permission. Father Maximilian Kugelmann then approached the Government of Prussia and succeeded in obtaining leave for an opening in the city of Limburg. Fathers Whitmee and Kugelmann rented, for the Society, the Walderdorf Castle in that place and thus the great Limburg house of the Society, mother house of our community in Germany and promotor of the famous Cameroon Mission, commenced its splendid career.

The Limburg foundation soon became a training centre for vocations for the Society, in addition to the existing centres: the Roman house and St. Patrick's College in Masio. It was Father Whitmee's constant policy to create as many training centres as possible and with this end in view he wrote to Father Patrick O'Grady:

> "I think that if we could have a small house in the city of Buenos Aires where we could have students attending the Seminary for the lectures (if the Bishop will allow it) this would be the surest, quickest and best way of having priests for the Argentine Mission. We could always send you five or six students to begin with and in this way you would soon have a body of priests. This is what has been going on in Porto Alegre in Brazil with apparently the greatest success." [17]

The demands of the Cameroon mission were many and amongst them the question of a community of Sisters occupied a high priority. Some of the German Fathers were of the opinion that the Sisters from a missionary foundation of Franciscans at Malendorf in Germany were suited to meet the demand, but Father Whitmee considered that this was the op-

---

16 Mercedes Arch. Bannin Correspondence.
17 Ib. Whitmee Correspondence.

portunity for bringing our own Pallottine Sisterhoods to the fore. "Our own Sisters for the Cameroons, or none at all" he is reported to have said. Early in 1891 he selected a certain Sister Mary Magdalene, an Englishwoman, as Superioress of a special branch of Pallottine Missionary Sisters; he installed this lady, with an assistant and five postulants of German nationality in the former College in Via Lungara, Rome (which had been closed when the house next door to the Generalate was purchased.)

During the interregnum of Don Carlo Orlandi, Father Whitmee continued to serve as Councillor and Procurator General and acting in the latter capacity, he executed a most important transaction:

> "We have bought (he writes in the letter to Father O'Grady quoted above) the house next to San Salvatore, with a vineyard. We gave 217,500 frs. for it, and with expenses and taxes it will come to about 250,000 frs. (about ten thousand pounds)." [18]

Possession of the premises was obtained about the middle of the year 1890 when Father Bannin was already in office. The Tablet has the following notice about this event:

> "The English Pallottine Fathers (Society of Missions) have bought the Palazzo Caccia in Rome and intend converting it into a seminary. It was in this Palazzo that St. Philip Neri lived when he came to Rome first and it is close to the church of San Salvatore in Onda, where the saint used to frequent." [19]

Sister Mary Magdalene was after a short time replaced by a Sister Fidelis who with several aspirants arrived from the United States on the 25th January 1892. The expenses of establishment were met chiefly by Father Whitmee, although the Sisters did what they could to eke out their resources.

> "The Pallottine Sisters receive English visitors to the Guest House attached to their convent. It is most pleasantly situated. Application may be made to Sister Fidelis, Palazetto Farnesina, Via della Lungara." [20]

The first Sisters trained in the Roman establishment left for the Cameroon — six Sisters — in October 1892. The ri-

---

[18] Ib.
[19] Tablet 19.7.90.
[20] Ib. 1.8.92.

gours of the climate and the lack of medical experience in dealing with tropical maladies played havoc with the health of these pioneer Sisters — as was happening to the pioneer priests as well — and four of them were soon compelled to return to Europe, where they found a home near the Limburg College.

The Roman community, besides its work of training members for the Foreign missions, was available also for work on the spot. Thus, in 1893 we find the Sisters being placed in charge of a Dormitory for the poor, established by the Circolo di San Pietro.

A news item in The Tablet shows the progress of the institute of the Sisters.

> "An interesting ceremony took place on June 27th, Feast of St. Ladislaus, King and Confessor, in the private chapel belonging to the Roman Convent of the Pallottine Missionary Sisters. The service was performed by the Rev. Father Cirillo, of St. John Lateran, who acting by delegation on the part of the Cardinal Vicar received the vows of three members of the Sisterhood. The Cardinal Vicar is the Protector of these Sisters, whose institute is especially dedicated to Our Lady Queen of Apostles. It is not a new foundation but a development of the work of the Venerable Vincent Pallotti, special emphasis having been given in recent years to foreign missionary work. After the novitiate the members take the three vows of religion, first for a year, then for two and five years and finally perpetual vows after ten years' observance of the rule. Each sister is bidden by the rule to hold herself in readiness to go to any part of the world, since the principal distinctive of the Congregation is missionary work among the heathens teaching and nursing in the pagan countries. They possess missionary centres in Africa and America." [21]

It was soon felt, however, that for the purposes of recruiting vocations for the Cameroon mission, Germany would be a more suitable base than Rome. The foundation of the Limburg House for the foreign Mission offered good prospects for a training centre for the Sisters in the same neighbourhood. It was therefore decided by Mother Mary Raphael Castellani, Superioress of the Pallottine Sisterhood, by Father General Bannin acting through the Procurator General Whitmee and by the ecclesiastical authorities both in Limburg and in Rome, that the house of the Sisters in Limburg should be acknowledged and confirmed as the mother house of an independent

---

[21] Ib. 7.7.94.
[22] 12.1.94.

branch of the Pallottine Sisters. It became known as the Missionary Congregation of Pallottine Sisters. Most of the Sisters attached to the original establishment set up at the Farnesina opted to join the Community at Limburg; some of them however stayed in Rome and we have been able to glean just a few items about their subsequent activities. Thus it was reported in The Tablet:

> "The English Pallottine Missionary Sisters are leaving their temporary headquarters at the Villa Muti in Frascati, to live in the Palazzo Grand-Torlonia, after living for some years at the Farnesina. This new house is in Piazza Scossa-Cavalli." [22]

Some months later we have news of a visit paid by Cardinal Vaughan "to the Convent of the English Pallottine Sisters at Palazzo Torlonia" where His Eminence gave Benediction on the occasion of a religious profession.

And finally, The Tablet of April, 17th 1897 informs us that "the Pallottine Sisters are now settled in Via del Babuino, nearly opposite the Hotel de Russie, their chapel being dedicated to the Quen of the Apostles."

This community, we understand, gradually dwindled away. Some of the Sisters joined the German branch in Limburg, others passed to other institutes.

From the facts which have been given it is possible to assess the justice of the claim which is traditionally made, to the effect that Father Whitmee was in effect the founder of the Pallottine Missionary Sisters.

Father Bannin on taking office as Vicar General of the Society intended spending part of his time in London, where he had, as we have seen, retained the rectorship of St. Pater's, and part in Rome. One of his Councillors resided permanently in England. It was an unsatisfactory arrangement in many ways. One of its consequences is that a meeting of the General Council of the Society once took place in the Hastings House, attended by Fathers Bannin, Crescitelli and Whitmee, who was on a visit to England at the time. This unusual event took place on the 28th December 1890.

CHAPTER VII

The Valparaiso house, whose origin we have examined earlier, was to prove a headache to Fr. Bannin and his councillors. The Archbishop of Santiage (under whose jurisdiction Valparaiso then was) had got in touch with the General and requested him to send two priests and some brothers to the city of Santiago, where a foundation would be given them, promising in return to make St. Aloysius's church in Valparaiso into a parish. The whole plan, to which Fr. Bannin acquiesced, is detailed in a letter which, under date of March 22nd, 1892, he sent to Fr. Patrick O'Grady in Mercedes.

> "I have promised the archbishop of Santiago to let him have two priests on consideration that he give our Fathers in Valparaiso a Spanish parish. This, it seems, he has done, and has further arranged with the Chilean Government that these two Fathers and three Brothers who were also asked for, should have free passages on a man-of-war, just going out there from France." [1]

In the end Fr. Lemarchand, who was stationed at Montevideo went to Valparaiso, accompanied by a brother. The Superior in Valparaiso was now Fr. Lorie, who was appointed parish priest on March 25th, 1893, when the Archbishop of Santiago fulfilled his promise of making St. Aloysius church into a parish. Fr. Lorie set about founding an English-language School in the city, which would serve as an offset to a Protestant English-language School which was engaged not only in propagating the knowledge of the English language in Valparaiso, but also in proselytizing. Before the college was opened, Fr. Lorie and Lemarchand, the former an Englishman, the latter a Frenchman, determined in concert to withdraw from the Society and announced their determination, with great lack of delicacy, at a dinner given in honour of the Patron, on June 21st, 1894. Fr. Gissler who was the third priest in the house, and the brother, were deeply pained with this circumstance and when the Arch-

---

[1] Mercedes Archives - Bannin Correspondence.

bishop agreed to receive the two priests into his archidiocese as secular priests, he realized that little or nothing could be now done for the real interests of the Society. Early in January 1895 the Society officially surrendered its responsibility for St. Aloysius' church, Valparaiso. For some time Fr. Lorie served as parish priest, but was relieved of this responsibility in April 1897. He devoted some years to carrying on the English Catholic College he had founded and died about 1903. It appears, from the testimony of some friends who were near him during his last days, that he repented of the step he had taken, and asked that his remains should be interred in the habit of the Society, a request which these fulfilled.

The Archbishop felt some uneasiness at the manner in which this mission had been wrested from our Society, for in 1900 he approached Fr. Whitmee, by this time Rector General, and asked him to re-accept it, which was done at the beginning of 1901, in which year Frs. Muller and McCaul again took possession of it. But of this, later.

The decision taken by the two Valparaiso priests was not unconnected with the heavy trial which had fallen on the Superiors of the Society, when out of the blue a General Visitation of the Society was ordered by the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars on the 17th of August, 1892.

General Visitations of this kind are unusual events and while much good can come from them, it sometimes follows that confidence in Superiors is shaken as a result, particularly when, as in this case, no specific reason for the measure is assigned. It has been conjectured that complaints were made because Fr. Bannin continued to reside in London and visited Rome only at intervals. Fr. Bannin himself, to whom no doubt the reasons were communicated under secrecy, stated that the "complaints were trivial and ill-informed." [2]

Visitations are easier to provoke than to conclude. The General Visitor only presented his Report in October of 1894, but even this did not mean the end of his zeal. Finally, Fr. Bannin's resignation as Vicar-General, which was accepted on April 27th, 1895, brought the visitation to an end. His successor was Fr. Scipio Tofini, a distinguished Italian prelate who a few years previously had resigned his preferments and entered the Society.

---

[2] do

It behoves us now to deal with the history of an organization in London, with which Fr. Bannin was to be intimately associated for many years and which absorbed much of his time and energy. This is the Catholic Association, founded in London in 1891. The purposes of this body, as enunciated right from the beginning, could not have been more praiseworthy; there is a universality about them, an insistence on the necessity of collaboration amongst Catholics which cannot but strike a sympathetic chord in anyone conversant with the ideals and the methods of Vincent Pallotti and his universal apostolate.

> "The great object (state the Rules of the Catholic Association, published in 'The Tablet') is to organize Catholics generally and locally into a compact body in which everyone shall feel that he or she is a member of an association working for the advancement of Catholic interests. The means by which these ends are to be brought about are: by ascertaining the names and addresses of all Catholics in each parish, town and district throughout Great Britain; by inviting everyone to become a member of the Association; by creating a fund for aiding struggling missions and the creation of new ones, assisting in paying off the debts of churches and school buildings, the support of children in danger of losing their faith, assisting as far as possible the interest of teachers in Catholic schools; by endeavouring to secure the return of Catholics as Poor Law Guardians, members of school Boards and other bodies of a non-political character; by the co-operation of existing societies, associations, guilds, leagues, etc, whose objects it will be the aim of this association to promote as far as possible; and by such other means as for the time may seem fit, and proper." [3]

Amongst the names of the earliest promotors of the Catholic Associaton we find two gentlemen who had long been friends of the Pallottine Fathers, both in London and Rome: Mr. J. P. Hearne, a prominent parishoner of St. Peter's, Hatton-Garden, and Mr. Charles J. Munich, who was the first Honorary Secretary of the Association and was a close friend of both Fr. Whitmee and Fr. Bannin. We feel that it is not a mere coincidence that these gentlemen were not without influence in the creation of an association which responded in so many ways to the Pallottine ideal. Our feeling becomes more definite when we learn of the support, encouragement and leadership which Fr. Bannin was to give to the Association.

In its very early days the Association sought to set up a series of subsidiary branches; thus we learn of their activities

---

[3] Tablet 11.7.91.

in erecting branches in Fulham, Camberwell and other places. As time went on, it was seen that the Association would best fulfil its purposes by having a strong central organization, with a widespread membership directly responding to this centre. On the 30th October, 1893 a great meeting, presided over by the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, was held in the Westminster Town Hall, at which over one thousand persons assisted. In the course of the meeting it was stated that:

> "The Catholic Association now numers 1100 members. It is established in nine parishes throughout London. It has members in every diocese in England and in the majority of the dioceses in Scotland. It is known in Ireland, Corsica, Spain, India, the United States and South America."

In the course of the Address which Cardinal Vaughan delivered on this occasion, he stated his great satisfaction at the spread of the Association and his approval of the principles on which it was based.

> "It is not to be supposed (he went on to say), as the Catholic laity have too often supposed in the past, that all the activity is to come from the priest and that the flock is to be quite passive. I want all to be alive; each mission is to be a scene of continuous activity, not only on the part of the priest but also on the part of his cooperators amongst the Catholic laity. Instead of merely coming to church and leading passive lives, all must remember that they are on a pilgrimage here which leads into the Heavenly Jerusalem... The priests will be filled with joy and consolation when thef see their hands strengthened by members of the Association."

On the same occasion His Eminence pointed out how necessary it was for the Catholics of Great Britain to have a social organization which would be enabled to express their common ideals and aspirations.

> "In order to bring about social intercourse amongst Catholics in London, it is necessary to have some organization which can have its representatives in all parts of the metropolis and which will be the means of making such gatherings as that which I see before me this evening".

At this period Mr. V. M. Dunford, was named Hon. Secretary and Treasurer of the Association. Mr. Dunford was to become Fr. Bannin's closest collaborator, not only in matters affecting the Catholic Association, but in many others as well.

Fr. Bannin's first public intervention in the affairs of the Catholic Association, as far as we have been able to find, is a lecture given by him at the Holborn Town Hall, under the auspices of the Association, on the 17th December 1895. He took part, at the end of January of the following year at another rally of the Association, again held at the Holborn Town Hall, at which he seconded in a public speech a resolution which called for justice to the Catholic schools. This was in the British Isles at that time the great debate: whether Catholic education (and incidentally, the education provided by other religious bodies for their co-religionists) should be supported or not from the public funds, which are drawn impartially from all the pockets of all the inhabitants. The Liberalistic theories on the subjeet and the bad example of France had created a powerful block of opinion amongst the politicians of the day in favour of exclusive support for just one type of school, which would be neither Catholic or Protestant. This position was fiercely resisted by the Catholics in the first place and it was one of the great merits of the Catholic Association that from the time of its foundation onwards, it was in the forefront of the fight. Fr. Bannin was naturally interested in this aspect of the Association because in his capacity of parish priest of the Italian Church, he was the Manager of one of the largest elementary schools in that part of London.

Some weeks after the event described above, we read that the annual "Conversazione" of the Catholic Association was held, again at the Holborn Hall, and that Fr. Bannin was on the platform. And on June 9th, 1896, we find him at the Annual Dinner of the Association, held at Anderdon's Hotel, making one of the after-dinner speeches. Fr. Bannin had by now become a familiar figure at the meetings and reunions of the Catholic Association. The following year he became the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Association, a post he was to hold till his death.

That year — 1897 — was an important one in the history of Catholic education in England. An Act of Parliament, known as the Voluntary School Act, had been passed. The Act provided that school associations to administer this Act should be set up wherever necessary and in consequence the Westminster Diocesan School Association was founded on the 18th of July, and Fr. Bannin was one of the founding members of the Association. For over fifty years the Catholics of England had entrusted their educational affairs to a Catholic School Committee, which was

of a general character. Now, under the new arrangement provided by the Act, it became necessary to set up local and diocesan committees, and in a short time eleven such bodies came into existence. These bodies were not intended to supersede the old Catholic School Committee, but in practice, since they dealt directly with the education Authority set up by the Governement, executive power passed into their hands. Fr. Bannin, by virtue of the large school which he conducted, and his shrewdness in dealing with the officials and his considerable experience, soon became a leading figure on the Diocesan School Association. At least in one respect he was a pioneer in the educational field. This was an age when instruction was coming to be recognized as the open sesame to progress and social advancement. It was the era of Evening Classes, Night Classes, Mechanical Institutes and so on, for the benefit of the vast masses of the youthful population whom economic necessity had excluded from secondary education, and too often, from the completion of the primary cycle. The school buildings of the Italian Church had been occasionally used for such classes, particularly for Italian children and youths anxious to learn the English language. But these classes were totally voluntary, in the sense that the entire expense fell upon the management of the school, which was already financially harassed from other directions. Father Bannin contrived to set up Evening Continuation Classes in the St. Peter's buildings, but found that he could not bear the expense himself and that the scholars were in no position to pay for the tuition. He therefore approached the London School for their help.

> "I found (he writes) the members and officials with whom I had to treat most interested and sympathetic; and the Rev. Stewart Headlam, the Chairman of the Committee for Evening continuation classes expressed his surprise that the Board had not been approached before. The Committee accepted "with thanks" the offer of my schools; and also agreed to my suggestion that the day school staff should be employed in the evening, on the grounds that the teachers would be perfectly in touch with those who had recently left and for whom the Continuation Classes had been established." [4]

It was ,for London, an experiment, as The Tablet editorially described it.

> "The Catholic public will watch with attentive interest the experiment which has been entered upon at the Italian Schools in co-operation with the London School Board... Father Bannin may have

[4] do 7.10.99.

hit upon a modus vivendi between himself and the London School Board by which a friendly co-operation can be established without loss of principle to either but with great gain to both... The Board provides all the means, on a liberal scale, of books, apparatus, teachers' salaries and the rest. Father Bannin, on the other side, provides the attendance of his own people at those classes in such numbers as to justify the expenditure. In the result the Board will be able to show an increase in the average attendance at the evening schools and Fr. Bannin will be able to conduct his social work with ample resources and every prospect of encouraging numbers. The management will remain in the hands of the priest and the staff of teachers employed by him in the day schoools will be recognized and acceped by the Board. Not the last important feature of the scheme will be the material addition to the teachers' salaries which this arrangement will secure... On the day of enrolment 350 young people and adults presented themselves and since that day many more have added their names. On the day of opening, Monday last, classes began in physical exercise, music, cooking, needlework and dressmaking, hygiene, shorthan and typewriting and other subjects. But the greatest number were enrolled for the study of languages. Nearly a hundred young Italians are bent seriously on learning English. Fifty Englishmen and others are learning Italian, seventy-five, French and some few seek some closer acquaintance with German and Spanish... The outstanding differences between Board and Voluntary Schools may happily find their adjustment along the lines adumbrated by this experiment." [5]

The closing sentence from this quotation shows that this newspaper shared the opinion of many people that the uneasy educational compromise enacted in 1897 could not last long and that some ajustment was necessary. It was the feeling of the Government of the day as well, and hence, in 1902 a new Education Bill was presented in Parliament.

As soon as the text of the ill was published, Father Bannin drew attention to the serious defects it contained. One of these was what was known as the "permissive" clause, which enabled the old voluntary schools to enjoy full rights only when the local educational authority considered this useful.

"The fact (Fr. Bannin pointed out) that its principal clause is permissive will make the hopes of many of the managers of our provincial schools very illusory. It will be quite easy in counties and boroughs where a school board is already existing to decline the responsibility for non-board schools, or where bigotry is rampant, to forego the power to help voluntary schools at all... Every effort should then be made to improve the Bill by making it compulsory and operative throughout the kingdom. To this end I beg to suggest

---

[5] do 23.9.99.

a feauture in that part of the metropolis which encircles the Italian Church. This procession was first held on the feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, 1895 and attracted considerable attention, not only because open-air processions were still unusual in London, but also because the Italian population of the district adorned the fronts of their house and even the streets after the traditional Italian manner — bright spots of colour, this one day of the year, in the drab Clerkenwell strects. As the years unfolded, it became, as it still is, one of the great annual events of Catholic London. The following description of the Procession as it was carried out in the early days, is taken from the Tablet.

> "Madonna del Carmelo is a title under which more than any other Our Lady is honoured by Italians. Accordingly the feast of our Lady of Mount Carmel has come to be regarded as the national Feast of the Italian colony in London. Thanks to Fr. Bannin PSM this religious festival has been made the centre of general festivity amongst them. The outdoor procession which has become a regular annual event, has come to be known all over London, especially by tram-car omnibus companies, who are compelled to suspend their traffic for a time in favour of this religious demonstration. The Chief Commissioner of Police wished this year to divert the course of the procession from its customary route but the clergy chaiming that the inhabitants of the district had at least equal rights with the tram-car companies, the objection was waived. Some 200,000 people assembled and lined the route which included Clerkenwell-Road, Eyre-Street Hill, Great Bath Street, Farringdon-Road and Hatton-Garden. Around the church alone there must have been 20,000 people. Eyre-Street Hill, which in ordinary times is a squalid enough place, was as gay as an Italian town en fete, decorated profusely as it was with banner garlands and festoons — albeit most of them were of paper. Thousands of fairy lamps lined the walls and crossed the street and a triumphal arch guarded the entrance. As the procession passed, many of the windows were found to be illuminated and fitted out as altars, with statues, lights and flowers. A special devotion of three particular houses in this street is that of strewing rose leaves from the windows on the processionists as they pass, and on Sunday one marvelled where so many roses were procured whose leaves came down like snowflakes in abundance. About 20,000 persons took part in the procession and the time occupied was about two hours... It is worthy of note that the enormous crowd showed most becoming respect, which did infinite credit to the ready sensibility to good impressions and the tolerant spirit of those from whom often so little is expected." [8]

---

[8] do 22.7.99.

So large a procession as this proved somewhat disturbing to the Protestant conscience and the question of its legality was raised in Parliament a couple of weeks later. We quote from the Daily Chronicle:

> "Mr. W, Johnston asked the Solicitor-General whether his attention had been called to an out-door Procession at Hatton Garden on Sunday the 16th of July in honour of 'the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel' when various Roman Catholic clergymen walked in the Procession and whether in view of 10 Geo. IV, c. 7, sec. 26, which imposed a penalty on Roman Catholic ecclesiastics who take part in such Processions and also of the Proclamation against Roman Catholic Processions issued on the 15th of June in the fifteenth year of the reign of the Queen, her Majesty would be advised to renew such proclamation in the maintenance of the law? The Attorney-General said his attention had been drawn to this matter by his honourable friend. There was no intention of renewing the proclamation in question." [9]

The law quoted by Mr. Johnston is the Catholic Emancipation Law of 1829, which did indeed contain the illiberal clause that Roman Catholic clergymen might not appear outside their places of worship in the vestments of their order. The law from the beginning was practically a dead letter, for it was impossible to prove that soutanes, surplices, copes, stoles and mitres were, strictly speaking, priestly vestments for in cerain circumstances they are worn by others besides priests; and, as regards the habits of Religious Orders, these are worn in some cases by members who themselves are not priests. The Proclamation quoted was made in the era of the "Papal Aggression" agitation and any responsible British politician preferred to forget about that unpleasant excursion into bigotry.

So the Procession went on. In 1902 "The Manchester Guardian," the great factual unsentimental newspaper, sent a Reporter to view the proceedings, and he saw this:

> "Acolytes passed with a statue of St. Anthony hung with lilies and banners. Old wrinkled Neapolitan women with black lace headress, another Statue and then the prettiest part of the procession — the young Italian women in their national costume. The first company wore long blue veils that fell to their waists over black dresses, the next had white veils and dresses, and the third the costume one sees on the fortunetellers. Very little girls in big white veils that they could hardly control walked very gravely behind, their hands clasped, eyes straight, heads bent, joining here and there in the hymn. Neith-

---

[9] Daily Chronicle 1.8.99.

er in the children or the girls was there any self-consciousness to be observed. As they filed down the little crooked streets, a long thin ribbon of muslin in the midst of the black tossing crowd, they looked very strange and foreign. And behind them came the acolytes and the brothers swinging incense, and the tall figure of a priest in a gold vestment. As they passed out of sight chanting their hymns one rubbed one's eyes. All these things seen over the shoulder of Police Constable 411 on a raw English afternoon' "

Another Catholic ceremony which Fr. Bannin was instrumental in reviving in London was the ceremonial Communion for the Sick at Easter-time. The first public mention we have been able to find of this ceremony is the following, taken from "The Tablet."

"On Sunday morning last the beautiful and touching ceremony of the solemn administration of the Paschal Communion to the sick was carried out in the Italian quarter with the utmost reverence and devotion. The procession left the church at the close of the seven o'clock Mass which was attended by a very large congregation chiefly of Italians. The procession was headed by crossbearers and acolytes and the Italian confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament in their picturesque scarlet and white habits, carrying lighted candles... The general congregation, in which the large proportion of men was particularly noticeable, followed bearing lighted tapers.... Throughout the progress of the procession the greatest reverence was manifested, the inhabitants of the streets traversed kneeling devoutly on the pavements as the Sacred Host passed by. Many of the houses were decorated with lights and flowers... The earliness of the hour and the fact that the district is almost exclusively Catholic accounts for the very few Protestant spectators to be seen along the route of the procession. Those non-Catholics who were present showed however the greatest respect, removing their hats and being seemingly greatly impressed by the evidence of faith and devotion with which they found themselves surrounded." [10]

These outdoor processions, periodically repeated, attracted the interest and respect of the general population of London, Catholic and non-Catholic. The efficiency of the schools attached to the church, the personality of the Rector, the loyal co-operation of his fellow priests, contributed as well to make this one of the best-known parishes in London and led to a great increase in the esteem in which the Italian settlers in that city were now coming to enjoy, after decades of derisive pity.

---

[10] Tablet 28.4.00.

"The Italian Church at Hatton Garden ministers in very large part, but not exclusively by any means, to the large Italian colony of London. It is one of the incidents of missions, especially in the heart of London, to find the tide of population, under the great improvements in streets and bulldings, shifting to other channels, and leaving the churches high and dry without a congregation. This is not likely to happen for many years to come at Hatton Garden, but the gradual and rapid advance of warehouses and flats, and the opening of new thoroughfares are threatening the existence of the highly-congested locality known as 'Little Italy,' made familiar at least once a year by the open-air procession through its maze of streets. They are, on the whole a quiet, law-abiding and inoffensive people, who industriously ply their special trades in ice-cream, roast chestnuts and potatoes, organ-grinding and asphalt-paving and add something to the picturesqueness of squalid London, and, no doubt, squeezed out of their over-crowded tenements, they will find other quarters not too far removed from the centre with which they are associated. The religious activity of the mission is great and thorough, and in the matter of education the schools are amongst the foremost in London for efficiency. The decision of the Country Council at its last meeting to allow the gradual development of the property by private owners, instead of sweeping away wholesale the entire colony by a general improvement scheme of their own, will enable all concerned to take time by the forelock and prepare for the inevitable change. The unsightly tenements will undoubtedly go but the 2000, more or less, of the displaced Italians will be able to find other dwellings near at hand. Although a highly congested district, there is little of distress, pauperism, disease or crime amongst these thrifty, hard-working, frugal and decent people." [11]

In the event, the development schemes were not pushed very vigorously and "Little Italy" subsists to this day, though the number of Italian-born people living in the neighbourhood it now small. The occupations of the London Italians are today very different from those of their predecessors around Hatton Garden; they learn the English language much more freely and find themselves able to associate on easy terms with the people of the country; and thus they do not tend to congregate in well-defined centres. But the Italian Church still beckons them for the distincively religious celebrations of their race and from many miles they hearken to the call.

Any account of Father Bannin's work in London would be incomplete without some details of the pilgrimage activities which the Catholic Association, under his leadership, carried out at this time. Though the nations of Europe were now criss-crossed with railways and the tram-car and finally the motor-

---

[11] do 14.11.03.

bus and the taxi were fast replacing the horse-drawn carriages which had expensively served the railway terminals and the population centres, the old notion survived that travel, particularly in foreign countries, was an individual enterprise whose expense was beyond the reach of the poor. The Catholic Association was possessed of the idea that it was good for people to undertake co-operative travel and that the Catholics of Great Britain could improve their minds ,and their religious allegiance, by visiting in parties the great shrines and cities, not only of their native land, but of the Continent. Inexpensive tours of Bruges, Lourdes, Oberammergau, Rome and other places were arranged and enthusiastically patronized. The first large-scale pilgrimage organized by the Association appears to have arrived in Rome on the 10th of October, 1898; there were some two hundred participants.

> "The members of the pilgrimage to Rome organized by the Rev. J. P. Bannin PSM of St. Peter's Italian Church arrived pleasantly in Rome. A rather dramatic incident marked their arrival in the eternal City, the Prefect of the Police having at once bidden them to remove the ribbon badges of the papal colours which they wore rather as a sign of recognition than as a flag. A lengthy and vivacious altercation ensued, as many persons as possible joining in the argument. Finally the matter was adjusted by compromise, as are many other things in Italy. The Prefect enforced his desire, if not the law, by receiving a promise that the badges would be worn only as far as the hotel, while the pilgrims gained their point of not being obliged to remove the colours at the moment of their arrival in Rome." [12]

When the pligrims were received by the Pope, he was attended at the throne by Mg. Stonor, Fr. William Whitmee and Father Bannin and after greeting the pilgrims he made an extempore address to them.

One of the pilgrims, a Mr. Cecil Smith presented to the Holy Father on this occasion a gift of the latest invention in micrometers, a delicate instrument with measurements in thousands of a centimetre and capable of unlimited measurement on an upward scale. "The Pope grasped his hand warmly and said: it is an honour to you."

> "Later (the account goes on) the Pope sent to Father Bannin a number of portraits of himself for distribution to the pilgrims and he has since seen Fr. Bannin in private audience. After the

---

[12] do 22.10.98.

audience he presented him with a silver medal, one of those struck for the feast of the Apostles in 1898. On the obverse is a copy of the Resurrection by Pinturrichio, in the Borgia Apartaments."

Two years later, for the occasion of the Holy Year, the Catholic Association arranged and took to Rome what was, up to that time, the largest pilgrimage ever to leave the British Isles. It was arranged in various sections, with different prices and the dominant idea was to make it possible for practically any wage- earner to take part, should he or she so wish. Thus the most expensive ticket was fixed at £17, and the cheapest at £6.15. Two trains, one carrying first and second class accomodation, the other second and third class, were provided.

Eleven hundred persons travelled on these trains and after their arrival in Rome they were joined for the ceremonial visits to the Basilicas and the Vaticans by some hundreds more who were either local residents or had come to Rome on their own.

"It is pleasing to observe that both earnestness and seriousness in prayer have been the great teaching of the English pilgrimage, that fervour in devotions recited and sung has been another, and that the virility and potentiality of English Catholicism has been a third and final one. Thus 'La Voce della Verità' which English Catholics have sometimes read amiss, at other times found ill-inspired and perhaps more often misquoted, sums up its impressions of the pilgrims thus: 'The English Pilgrimage has proved one of the most splendid of the Holy Year. Composed of about two thousand persons, it proceeded with wonderful order and piety to the visiting of the basilicas, the pilgrims going in hudreds of carriages. Within the temples the pilgrims moved processionally, displaying an admirable behaviour which was the edification of all present." [13]

Besides the general Audience which His Holiness granted to the Pilgrimage as a whole, there was a special Audience for the organizers.

"In the course of this audience Father Bannin explained to the Pope the work of the Catholic Association, dwelling especially upon its pilgrinage department. This is the third time Father Bannin has led pilgrimages to Rome, and on this occasion the numbers far exceed those of the previous parties. The story of the pilgrimage was told; its visits to the four basilicas, the great happiness of the pilgrims in receiving the benediction of the Pontiff in St. Peter's and their deep appreciation of the attention bestowed on them by the Holy Father."

---

[13] do 27.10.00.

The pilgrims did not, as is natural, devote every available moment to the works of piety and devotion. Dinners, formal and informal entertainments, crowded the evenings, particularly after the performance of the ubilee exercises. And at the end of the pilgrimage they were the guests of San Silvestro in Capite.

> "The last of the receptions was given by the Rector of San Silvestro in Capite, after the celebration of the closing devotions on Thursday, October 18th. At the appointed hour, four in the afternoon, the church was filled with pilgrims and residents... The reception took place immediately afterwards in the rooms behind the west transopt, which have of late been restored to the service of the church, whose property they were in the days of the Franciscan Nuns. It was attended by Archbishop Stonor, the English Bishops, the members of the English-speaking colony and the pilgrims still remaining, who numbered about six hundred... Parties of pilgrims had gone to the shrines of Pompeii, Assisi and Loretto and to the sights of Naples, Florenze, Milan and Venice."

On the 19th of June of the year 1900, at the Annual Meeting of the Catholic Truth Society in London, Father Bannin announced that the Catholic Association had under study a project for setting up an Insurance Society for Catholics. The proposal immediately received much attention and there was considerable correspondence in the public Press. We find "A London Catholic Merchant" offering this advice:

> "The Catholic Association has so far acquitted itself with credit to the Catholic cause by covering ground not previously occupied and there are vast future possibilities before it in the same cause. But apart from the fact that insurance business is a strictly commercial pursuit, requiring enormous capital to work it, it is one of the fiercely competed trades in the world. Should the hitherto skilful pilots of the Association allow our barque to be drifted into the Charybdis of 'Benevolent' Life Insurance, we shall be plunged into the grave of numerous predecessors before we are much older." [15]

The correspondent goes on to make it clear that he is not inimical to the Catholic Association as such, for he proceeds to pay it a sincere tribute.

"The Catholic Association has proved itself quite a capable caterer, much superior from the Catholic point of view to any

---

[14] do 14.7.00.

outside agencies. Yet the Catholic Union, the Franciscan Tertiaries and the German community at Whitechapel, in their three separate pilgrimages, must needs employ a Protestant agent, Why is this?"

In the columns of the same newspaper Fr. Bannin dealt with the strictures of the "London Catholic Layman."

> "What I claim for the Association (he writes) is this: the right to consider every good scheme that Catholics may bring before it; the right to ascertain for its members, whether a matter which is intended for Catholic good is worthy for them to associate with. The work of the Association is Catholic in spirit as well as in name and therefore embraces everything that tends to benefit Catholics. It does not confine its energies only to getting up dance parties, or launch garden fetes; nor is its mission attained when it promotes small and large pilgrimages. Everything which bears the Catholic name, everything which makes for the Catholic good is an interest for the members of the Catholic Association." [16]

He then states that the original suggestion about Catholic insurance came from a Mr. Picton of Southend.

> "The scheme as broached by its originator commended itself to some of us because he was prepared to accept such suggestions as would modify its extent and make it entirely Catholic in its scope. Such was, for instance, that the sums to be insured could be small, so as to benefit the working man, while leaving it in great measure to the working classes themselves to carry out the scheme. This meant association of men with men, and when possible to be guided by, or presided over, by their priest, and therefore Catholic Associations. When men could meet together in a parish or district in their own provident subscriptions, the priest could come in easy contact with them and thus a beautiful and practical Catholic spirit could be brought to bear on the meetings and on the individuals..."

The earnestness, it seems to us, which shows up behind Father Bannin's sentences just quoted find their just explanation in the fact that he is here setting out, in concrete proposals, the great ideals of the Catholic Apostolate, which he had learned from Vincent Pallotti!

The London Catholic Merchant was not appeased by Fr. Bannin's explanation, for on the following week he again writes to say, in somewhat sarcastic vein, that

---

[15] do 21.7.00.
[16] do 28.7.00.

"The long homilectic apology which follows the Chairman's explanation is interesting. A much more verdant orator, however might eloquently expound a brief from so trite though venerable a text. The Chairman's dream has been dreamed many times before and its spell as often broken. Forty years ago the 'Catholic Association for the Suppression of Intemperance and the Diffusion of Truth' was launched in Birmingham and was to bring about a Catholic Millenium, but resulted in a Catholic Fiasco. A few years ago we had the great smash of the 'St. Patrick's United Assurance Sick and Burial Society' which carried devastation to hundreds of Catholic workingmen's homes all over the country." [17]

The "London Catholic Merchant" felt that he had gone perhaps a trifle too far in dispatching shafts of irony against earnest men, for on the very next week he returns to the topic with a letter which concludes with these word:

> "I yield to nobody in solicitude for the promotion of social unity and co-operation amongst my co-religionists; and should watch with interest any indipendent attempt in that direction. But I earnestly trust the Catholic Association will decline the invitation to inmesh itself in the toils of insurance business in any shape or form by putting itself in competition with existing institutions. Its policy, past and present, proves that it is equipped by officers who possess the constructive faculty; and I shall be very much surprised in they allow themselves to be seduced into the ranks of the time-worn beaten track of copyists." [18]

On a later occasion The "London Catholic Merchant," dealing with a different matter, viz, the great Pilgrimage which the Catholic Association led to Rome in the autumn of that year, went out of his way to pay a tribute to the "kind influence of the ever-resourceful Father Bannin."

The strictures passed on the proposed Insurance scheme did not go without contradiction. The Mr. Picton who has already been mentioned as the originator of the idea, wrote in to say that past failures in any type of business are no justification for future inaction, and he quoted the bursting of the South Sea Bubble, which did not result in the halting of all business throughout the British Isles, and the keeling-over of the *Captain,* which did not result in abandonment of the construction of batteships.

Of greater interest for us is the intervention — also in the columns of The Tablet, made by Fr. Aloysius Monselle, who also

---

[17] do 4.8.00.
[18] do 11.8.00.

shows zeal for the "apostolic" aspect of the proposed insurance scheme.

> "I speak (he writes) from personal experience — an experience dating back to 1887 — of mission work in New York City. I therefore hail with delight the proposed scheme of the Catholic Association. If organized and carried out on the same lines as the Catholic Mutual Benevolent Association of Canada, or the Catholic Benevolent Legion and the Catholic Knights of America, the proposed Catholic Mutual Provident Society will, in my estimation, go a long way to bring about greater union among all clases of Catholics of this country, and thus help to solve some of the religious problems of the day... I have known many who, in consequence of having been brought into contact with the priest at the social and business gatherings of these Associations, have been induced to become again practical Catholics, thus helping to lessen the leakage. Again, from the ranks of these Associations have priests been able to obtain lay help and co-operation, so necessary to the building up of successful parishes. The great and rapid strides that have been made in church building in New York within the past twenty years, I consider, are due on the one hand to the zeal and energy of the pastor and on the other to the constant, active and unselfish co-operation on the part of the laity... These associations are organized not only for insurance purposes (i. e., to provide for the widow and the orphan) but also 'to improve the social condition of members;' therefore special importance is attached to their social functions which are quite a feature. In various ways the old and the young are brought together for social purposes thus fostering Catholic friendship and promoting Catholic weddings." [19]

In the end, the Catholic Mutual Provident Society never did get started. The field, as was pointed out by the "London Catholic Merchant,' was a fiercely competitive one and more capital than the Catholic Association could have raised would have been required.

Father Bannin celebrated his Silver Jubilee as a priest at the end of 1900. The occasion was marked by a Jubilee Mass in the Italian Church and by a presentation in the evening at the Clerkenwell Town Hall.

> "Two committees (says a contemporary account) occupied the platform, one of the congregation, the other of the Catholic Association. Mr. Geoffry Topham, chairman of the parishoners' committee, after a few prefatory remarks, called upon Mr. Taylor to read the address, which was then presented to Fr. Bannin with a cheque for 300 guineas. Mr. Delaney, on behalf of the Catholic As-

---

[19] do 22.11.00.

sociation then presented their address, which was read by Mr. Valentine Dunford, KSG, and an accompanying cheque for £ 100... Fr. Bannin, in a happy response, returned thanks for the goodwill which had been displayed towards him and the handsome gifts which had accompanied its expression. He referred to the excellent and happy understanding that existed between him and his people and to the advantage of encouraging the co-operation in the fullest way of the laity. The Catholic Association had attributed its success to his efforts, but it had been entirely an illustration of lay effort... It was an Association devoted to the cultivation of a spirit of fraternity and love. As to the testimonial of the Catholic Association and its handsome gift of £ 100 he could not but recognize that it was the most satisfactory answer to the few adverse criticism that had been offered to its recent work. After two most successful pilgrimages to Rome in past years, the Holy Father had himself asked the Association to conduct a special one to Rome this year; and in consequence they drew up a scheme which offered to the Catholic working classes, as well as the middle classes, the special advantages of low rates to enable them to visit the Eternal City, to show their loyalty to the Holy See and gain the Jubilee Indulgence. Were it not for this, numbers of Catholics would not have been able to undertake what is usually a very expensive journey. As it was, over one thousand persons availed themselves of the offer and were taken out in two sections and two special trains. Nearly five hundred other English Catholics joined the pilgrims in Rome, thus forming a procession of almost fifteen hundred people, English-speaking Catholics, making the visits to the four Basilicas; and it was a demonstration of loyalty and piety that astonished even the Romans themselves. That an association of laymen should have been able to do this, and do it so nobly, spoke well for the interest it took in Catholic work. Father Bannin then went on to disclose an interesting fact. He had been the recipient at the beginning of the year of a legacy of £ 450 from a Jew, who had been a member of the choir of St. Peter's Church. That legacy, he thought, he could not put to a better use than the renovation of the organ. But one improvement followed another in the church until he had incurred a debt of about £ 1000 in thoroughly cleaning, repairing and decorating the church and the presentations made to him by the congregation that night and by the members of the Catholic Association, would, with the legacy he had mentioned, enable him to almost clear the debt. Father Bannin then thanked the neighbouring clergy for their congratulations and said that they had always worked together and had lived on good terms with one another.... Besides the clergy of the neighbouring missions, the Rev. Mr. Canney, Anglican Rector of the parish of St. Peter's, Saffron Hill, was present to show his goodwill."

After these details of Fr. Bannin's activities in London, both as parish priests of St. Peter's and Chairman of the Catholic

Association, we may return to the vicissitudes of the Hastings mission, whose origin and early development we have examined earlier. Fr. Dominic Crescitelli was appointed Rector of Hastings after the withdrawal of Fr. Carmody; the nomination was renewed in 1896. In 1898 Fr. Aloysius Monselle was appointed Rector.

An interesting feature of the Hastings Mission which comes into the picture during this tenure of office by Fr. Crescitelli is the annual Procession from the church through the town to Battle Abbey. The origin of this procession is associated with the name of Mr. Lister Drummond, a Catholic barrister whose family connections on the one hand embraced Lord John Russel, who figured so much in the anti-Papal Agression in 1850, and on the other Mr. Coventry Patmore the convert poet. Mr. Drummond was a public speaker of no mean ability and he devoted much time and talent to the defense of Catholicism wherever he could secure a hearing; he was in fact, a member of the movement which led up to the Catholic Evidence Guild. It was his practice to speak at street-corners, parks and other places wherever an audience could be assembled and he delighted in following the tracks of the no-Popery orators who at that time used to secure some employment as speakers in the more fanatical chapel halls. It was the day of "ex-Monk Widdows," "ex-Priest Slatery," "the Escaped Nun," Pastor Chiniquy and other exponents of the sort which had its archetype in Maria Monk; people mentally diseased, or knaves; and sometimes both.

Mr. Drummond's first activity in Hastings of which we have record, is described in the following terms:

> "On Sunday morning, with the approbation of the clergy of St. Mary's Star of the Sea, Mr. Lister Drummond comenced the first of a course of three lectures on the beach at Hastings. Mr. Drummond lectured for nearly an hour to a large attentive audience on 'The infallibility of the Pope'." [20]

The beach lectures, as will be seen from the quotation which follows, attracted much attention — and, as was to be expected, some opposition.

> "The recent visit of 'pastor' Chiniquy to Hastings, where he delivered a lecture on 'Why I left the Church of Rome' has not been allowed to pass without an effort on behalf of the local Catholics to counteract any possible evil results upon uninformed

---

[20] do 29.8.86.

and impressionable minds. Accordingly the public hall was recently the scene of a gathering which cannot fail to benefit the Catholic cause in the Premier Cinque Port. Under the able chairmanship of the Earl of Ashburnham and supported by the Catholic clergy of Hastings and St. Leonard's, Mr. Lister Drummond lectured on: 'Why I joined the Church of Rome'. The beach lectures given by Mr. Drummond last summer probably accounted for the large audience, mainly composed of non-Catholics which filled every part of the spacious building... At the close of the proceedings votes of thanks to both chairman and lecturer were proposed by two non-Catholic gentlement. Many hudreds of Catholic Truth Society leaflets were distributed at the doors." [21]

Mr. Drummond's efforts were successful in many directions as is shown by this item which appeared in the same newspeaer a few weeks later:

"The Catholic lectures in Hastings have aroused considerable local interest. For many years Protestant agitators have had it all their own way in the ancient borough and the opportunity recently offered to the inhabitants of hearing the other side has been welcomed in the most encouraging manner. The beautiful church of St. Mary Star of the Sea, so energetically worked by the Fathers of the Pious Society of Missions, is largely attended by non-Catholics on Sunday evenings and the constant stream of conversion has of late shown a marked increase." [22]

For several months Mr. Drummond continued to lecture at frequent intervals in the Market Hall. The general disposition of the towns-people was so encouraging that the time seemed at hand for some public manifestation of the new attitude. Accordingly, in conjunction with the Guild of Ransom, a Procession from St. Mary's Church to the remains of the Lady Chapel in the ruins of Hastings Castle was planned for the 5th of August, 1897 and duly took place.

"The Very Rev. Fr. Bannin instructed those taking part in the proceedings to recite the Rosary as they walked to the castle and on no account to take notice of any deprecatory criticism that might be made by non-Catholics with regard to the pilgrimage... The procession was then formed, headed by the beadle or verger of the Italian Church, Hatton Garden... There were in the procession Frs. Bannin, Monselle, Donohue and Antonio (from Hatton Garden) as well as the Rev. Fr. Fletcher, Master of the Guild of Ransom." [23]

---

[21] do 21.11.96.
[22] do 19.12.96.
[23] do 14.8.97.

It is a not inconsiderable walk from St. Mary's Church up the hill to the ruined castle, and Hastings in the month of August was then, as now, a holiday resort crowded with the holiday-makers. Most of them had surely never seen a Catholic procession on the streets before. This is how it struck a reporter in the local paper "The Hastings Observer" who wrote:

> "A strange imposing spectacle the pilgrims made as they reverently moved in procession up the grassy slopes leading to the castle. The sight was one that will not easily be lost to the memory of those who were privileged to see it. The spectator might have fancied he must either be reading a page of religious history, or have suddenly been transported to a continental town. No such procession has every been seen within the streets of Hastings, at least, since the days of the Reformation and now, after more than three centuries a devout custom of the earlier times is revived and meets with nothing but respect from those who gaze upon it."

Next year Mr. Lister Drummond returned again to his apostolate on the Hastings Beach, for we find him on two Sundays preceding the procession, holding lectures on the sea front, his subject being "The Catholic Church and the Bible." On the last Sunday the local Calvinistic society took courage and challenged the lecturer about the intolerance and cruelties of the Church. Mr. Drummond countered by citing the conduct of the Pilgrim Fathers in the United States — Protestant to a man — who whipped Quakers naked through the streets, bored their tongues with red-hot irons and put them to death. Thorny precedents, these; the questioners then took refuge in charges of disloyalty against the Catholics:

> "Mr. Drummond and his brothers were charged with disloyalty by an irate and portly Kensitite with a Hyde Park voice... Mr. Drummond stated that his only consolation, in the face of this charge was that the Lord Chief Justice of England, the Postmaster General and no less tan three of the Judges were Catholics, and therefore Her Majesty the Queen who had appointed them, evidently did not share in this opinon... The result of this reply was the striking up of the National Anthem by the Kensitites, who probably expected the lecturer and his companions to turn pale and flee in confusion. But Mr. Drummond, who also possesses a Hyde Park voice for use when necessary, and the Catholics present took up the hymn with vigour and the meeting came to an enthusiastic close."

How many people in England today know who Kensit was, or the Kensitites? The asperities of religious controversy have

almost all been filed away in our day and age, and surely it is better so. Perhaps the truth of the matter is that Kensit and his like have been educated out of existence by the efforts and the sacrifices, over the years, of Lister Drummond and *his* like.

On the year, 1899, the Press of the time reports " the third annual pilgrimage" of Hastings, and the local paper laments, with the commendable alacrity proper to an organ serving the interests of a popular resort, that too little publicity had been given locally to "the most picturesque and striking demonstration of Roman Catholic activity that is to be found anywhere in England."

> "The majority of the clergy who took part in the out-of-door celebration were from the great Italian church, the head-quarters of processional ceremonial in England: Fathers de Cristofaro, Bannin, Zepf, they were accompanied by Frs Crescitelli and Monselle."

On this occasion too the local Kensitities felt it necessary to bear witness to their narrow faith.

> "It appears that while the 'Popish Procession' was in progress, the Kensitites were not spectators only. They found something to do and while the Romanists were in the Castle grounds, they collected on the Ladies Parlour hill-side, to pray and sing... A Rev. A. Roger, of the Protestant National Federation then addressed the faithful on the 'swindle of St. Walpurga's oil, made in Germany and sold wholesale at about one penny a bottle, but retailed at a Nottingham monastery at one shilling the bottle, and which, though vaunted as a cure-for-all, proved on analysis to be water, and water only.' He next touched, unfavourable, on the Scapular, the Immaculate Conception and the Infallibility of the Pope."

With these accounts of its origin, we will take leave of the great Hastings Procession which to this day continues to be one of the great attractions of that resort in early August; devoid now of the element of contradiction, for the original Kensities are all dead and their successors are too few to keep track of all the processions which proceed peacefully in England. They have therefore opted, wisely, to leave well alone.

In 1898 Father Aloysius Monselle was appointed Rector of Hastings. He evidently found the school premises in a bad way, for on March 19th of that year he inserted an appeal lor funds in The Tablet, which ran as follows:

> "The Faa di Bruno Memorial Schools, Hastings. Wanted £ 2000 for the purpose of erecting new schools at Hastings as a memo-

rial of the late Dr. Faa di Bruno PSM, the well-known author of Catholic Belief. Converts to the Faith are in a particular manner appealed to." [24]

In a covering letter addressed to the Editor, Father Monselle explains the basis of his appeal, and the reasons which lay at the back of it.

"It is now over twenty years since the late Dr. Faa di Bruno first published his well-known 'Catholic Belief' The incalculable good that has been wrought by this little book not only in England but also in the Colonies and in the United States has been testified to by very many. As a popular Manual for instruction in the Catholic Faith it has been in constant use ever since the good Dr. Faa di Bruno first published what he termed his 'labour of love'. About ten years ago Dr. Faa di Bruno died in Rome. Though dead for this long time I do not know that any steps have been taken to erect a memorial to perpetuate his memory. There must still be many friends and admirers of Dr. Faa di Bruno — there must be very many who have to thank 'Catholic Belief' for the inestimable benefit of Catholic Faith — all of whom would be willing to aid in erecting a memorial to perpetuate his memory. With the cordial approval of the Rt. Rev. F. Bourne, Bishop of Southwark and of my superiors I propose to erect new parish schools for the education of the Catholic children of Hastings, which schools will be called the 'Faa di Bruno Memorial schools.' For this purpose we shall require about £ 2000. Our present schools are in the basement or crypt of the church. They are small and inconvenient. At any moment we are liable to have them condemmed by the Education Depart. Dr. Faa assisted in the foundation of the Hastings Mission. In it he always took a lively interest. We feel sure that no memorial would be more pleasing to the saintly old man than the proposed memorial schools." [25]

The advertisement was continued in the Press for about two years and eventually the schools were built, though we do not know if the sums received in virtue of the appeal were sufficient to defray the cost of them. In a subsequent letter to the same newspaper Father Monselle makes it clear that his was at that time a poor and struggling mission.

"Speaking of the mission under my charge, I may say that the parishoners do not even contribute funds sufficient to pay all necessary expenses of the church and clergy, to say nothing of those of the school. Nevertheless we carry on our school because we consider it an almost absolute necessity for the maintainance of the

---

[24] do 19.3.98.
[25] do.

faith of our people. So deeply rooted is this consideration that I may safely say that even if at some future date we were to be deprived of all Governement Grants (this was the subject of his letter) we would still feel bound to make a big effort to continue maintaining our school as efficiently as we do now. At the same time these dispositions of ours, which I have every reason to think are likewise the dispositions of all good and zealous priests should not be the cause of loss of the help and aid which we are legally entitled to received from the 'Aid Grant'." [26]

Eleven miles from Hastings stands Rye, another of the famous Cinque Ports. Built on a steep hill, girded on one side by a great seawall indenting a considerable harbour, ocean-going ships once tied up by its wharves; some trick of the sea currents has silted up the port, the waters have receded, and Rye is now — may the assonance be pardoned — high and dry and miles away from the sea which may be seen, on a fine day, shimmering across the salt flats and the reclaimed meadows.

Ancient Rye, once so important in the defence of England was a heavily fortified town, with enfiladed streets, as it well needed to be, for raiders from across the Channel, from the Spains and even from Barbary, were apt to attack it in the by-gone days. When the religious changes came in the sixteenth century, the Old Religion was utterly wiped out in Rye, as happened in all the smaller English towns and villages, and the only relics left were its fortress-like church with the empty niches where the statues had been and the chapels and chancels bereft of the stone altars which they had obviously been built to contain.

Rye is as picturesque a place as any in England; the painters discover some intensity of light about this neighbourhood which challenges their skill. It has long been a resort for artists, writers and skilled craftsmen, and other people of sensibility, and amongst such there are always Catholics to be found. About 1860 Bishop Butt attempted to start a mission here, but there were not enough Catholics to support it, so the effort failed. In 1898 Bishop Bourne procured a site in the town and asked our priests in Hastings to establish a mission there. They agreed. Information on the birth and growth of the Rye Mission may be gleaned from Fr. Monselle's communications to the Press, in which he asks for the assistance of his co-religionists. Thus he writes:

---

[26] do 6.8.98.

"The Rye Mission was established forty years ago by Bishop (then Fr.) Butt. In the course of time, partly by reason of lack of means and partly by reason of scarcity of priests it was found necessary to close it up. Recently however Bishop Bourne, in view of the reopening of the mission, purchased a central property for church, school and rectory for £550, of which £400 remains as a mortgage debt. The interest on this debt will be paid from rents of two small cottages at present on the property. I make mention of this to show that although we have been forced to make the new beginning with debt, we have at the same time provided for it without unnecessarily burdening the few Catholics of the town. Now we should like to erect a small, neat and attractive chapel and this as soon as possible. Such a chapel will meet all present necessities and also the requirements of some years, until there is a marked increase in the Catholic population. For this purpose we shall need some £400 or £500. Who will help?... In pre-Reformation days Rye was a centre of Catholic Faith. The remains of its monasteries are its witnesses. The very seal of the town testifies to its marked devotion to the Mother of God. In its centre there is a representation of a Gothic church, the transept doorway of which forms a sort of niche, holding a statue of Our Lady and the Divine Infant. In the outer circle are the words: Ave Maria, Gratia Plena, Dominus tecum, Benedicta tu in mulieribus... Rye is 11 miles from Hastings. It is under the spiritual care of the Fathers of the PSM and is served from Hastings. Mass is said every Sunday at the residence of Mr. M. Croucher, Ivy House, Tower-Street." [27]

An unknown correspondent got in touch with Father Monselle and pointed out that the sum he was appealing for seemed excessive, particularly bearing in mind that a suitable iron chapel could be erected for not more than £200. To which observation Fr. Monselle made the following rejoinder:

"Iron chapels, no matter how neat or ornate in appearance, are not allowed to be erected in this ancient town. The local bylaws require all buildings of public assembly, such as churches, chapels, etc. to be built of brick or stone, with walls not less than thirteen inches thick... I have already received £239 and £55 more are promised... we have a special reason for hastening. This year will be a year of great importance in the history of the town of Rye, which is to celebrate the 600th year of its mayoralty." [28]

Father Monselle did not succeed in having the chapel built for the centenary celebrations, but, as we learn from a letter he pushed on with the task.

"The new church of St. Walpurge in Rye (he writes) is rapidly approaching completion. It will be out of the hands of the contrac-

---

[27] do 11.3.99.
[28] do 6.5.99.

tors in May and shortly afterwards will be ready for solemn dedication... In the course of construction several alterations of the plans were found necessary, which will increase the cost by about £200... All claims for the building must be satisfied before the solemn opening takes place." [29]

He writes on this occasion from Rye itself, where he had gone to live. The Sunday duty had till then been performed from Hastings, which was at this period linked with Rye by means of a long and expensive ralway journey. In order to avoid this hardship, Father Monselle left Hastings at the end of 1899 and Father Crescitelli was appointed Rector in his place.

St. Walpurge's church was solemnly blessed on August 30th, 1900 by the Bishop of Southwark. The building and its fittings are thus described:

"The church, which is in the early English style, was erected from plans prepared by Canon Scholes of Yeovil, at a cost of over £ 800. For the present, seating accomodation — for about one hundred and twenty persons — is provided by chairs. The altar is of white marble, over which hangs a picture, painted and presented to the church by Mr. Charles Ffoulkes, formerly an artist in Rye. The windows are of plain cathedral glass. All the money to pay for the erection is at hand, having been raised by private subscriptions." [30]

The ceremony was attended by a number of priests from Hastings, St. Leonard's, Canterbury and London, amongst them Frs. Crescitelli, Bannin, Meager, Callaghan and Monselle. The Mayor of Rye and members of his corporation were also present and special chairs were placed for them before the altar.

"Outside in the street (wrote the South-Eastern Advertiser) a number of interested persons watched the priests and laity as they made their exit, and the admirable spirit of tolerance shown by the Mayor and members of the corporation seemed to have been reflected in these good people. Protestants, who out of respect for their chief magistrate, had taken a leaf out of his book of Christian charity... Never so much as a scoff or a single jeer was heard, and no one would have thought that so momentous an event in history had taken place as the opening of the first Catholic church erected since the Reformation in a hitherto ultra-Protestant town."

After the religious ceremony the Bishop, Mayor and corporation and guests were entertained to lunch at the George Hotel.

---

[29] do 31.3.00.
[30] do 8.9.00.

At its end the Bishop proposed the toast usual on such occasions in England — the Pope and the Queen. In the course of his speech Bishop Bourne paid a special tribute to Father Monselle "because to him above all was due this work. He therefore expressed to Father Monselle his personal thanks and the thanks —of all those who had the interests of Rye at heart." Father Bannin then proposed the health of the Mayor and corporation, stating that "this morning they had heard from the Bishop that it was their duty to obey all those in authority, and they, as Catholics in the town, were therefore bound to recognize the Mayor as their chief authority; and whilst they bowed down and recongnized the authority of Caesar, they hoped Caesar would be merciful to them not put the rates of the church too high." To this the Mayor responded that it was not the custom in Rye to charge rates on places of worship, and that the new church opened that day certainly came within that description. And with this exchange of pleasantries, the occasion came to a close.

In 1902 Father Michael Carmody was named Rector of Hastings and Father Crescitelli then took up residence in Rye. It was laid down, however, in the General Chaper of 1903 that the mission could best be served from Hastings, and in consequence some months later Fr. Crescitelli returned once more to Hastings, and Rye was attended from that place on Sundays. In 1905, after Fr. Carmody left Hastings in order to go to Florence House, Rye was handed back to the Bishop of Southwark, who at first secured a resident priest for the place, but after a short time he had to be withdrawn. The reason lay in a statement which this Bishop made, in October 1906, that Rye was one of those places in his diocese "where there ought to be a priest in residence but there were no means to keep him." After some years of intermittent parish life, Rye was handed over the Conventual Fransciscan, who built a new church and monastery in the place, which is now a headquarters for this community.

We will now take up anew the thread of the story of our priests in San Silvestro in Capite, Rome. In the long interval between the expulsion of the Nuns and the Pallottine occupancy of the church, the building had been sadly neglected and the beautiful old courtyard had become choked with weeds. Father Whitmee's first task was therefore to put all these things in order, and, as funds were necessary, he set up a Committee

of English residents and visitors, under the chairmanship of the Duke of Norfolk. The work was commenced in 1888 and was finished by March of the following year, as we learn from a note in The Tablet:

> "The English church of San Silvestro has just been completed and yesterday the new high altar was used for the first time. Very charming the little church looks now, with its new gilding and carefully-carved ornaments." [31]

We presume that the work was performed on the altar itself, for the super-structure of the altar appears to be unchanged from the original design drawn by Michaelangelo. The restoration was completed, but not paid for. Amongst the devices resorted to by Father Whitmee to raise funds we find the fairly usual one of a raffle, but the prize offered was unusual.

> "The Holy Father has given a present to the English Church of San Silvestro. A Lottery is to be held by his special permission and the income derived from the lottery tickets will go in aid of the church restoration fund. The present consists of a little statue of silver metal about 20 inches high, representing Our Lady Patroness of the Shepherds." [32]

At this period Father Kenelm Vaughan, member of the famous Vaughan family which gave so many prelates and clergy to the Church, was in Rome during an interval of his almost incessant journeyings about the world on various apostolic enterprises. His present concern was to obtain papal approval for a religious sodality known as the Confraternity of Expiation, which had already obtained the approval of the Bishops of England. When finally papal approbation was secured, Fr. Vaughan got Fr. Whitmee's consent to use San Silvestro as the Roman headquarters of the undertaking.

> "Fr. Kenelm Vaughan has received a Papal Rescript authorizing the establishment of a branch of the Confraternity of Expiation. The Decree was issued and signed on the vigil of Pentecost and the inaguration took place next day in San Silvestro (on the same day as the monument to Giordano Bruno was unveiled in another part of the city)." [33]

The Register of the sodality was entrusted to Fr. Whitmee and for a time regular services were held each week in the Chapel

---

[31] do 9.3.89.
[32] do 7.4.90.
[33] do 19.6.89.

of the Crucifixion in the church. The first great ceremony organized by Fr. Whitmee in the San Silvestro church was the Requiem for Cardinal Newman, which was held here instead of in the titular church of the late Cardinal, by special permission of the Cardinal-Vicar of Rome. It was a great occasion, which was attended by all the important clergy and laity of the city. The Elogium of the late Cardinal, placed, according to the custom, over the doorway of the church, was composed by the Rector of the Scots College, Mgr. Campbell, in faultless style. This was the text:

IOANNI HENRICO NEWMAN
S. GIORGII IN VELABRO DIACONO CARDINALI
INGENII ACUMINE PRAESTANTIA ELOQUII
VIRTUTUM SPLENDORE EXIMIO
QUI INTER ERRORES GENTIS SUAE ANGLICANAE CRETUS
LUCEM UNICE SIBI DILECTAM QUAESIVIT
DUCENTE DEO
IN UNITATE ROMANA INVENTAM SALUTAVIT
VERBO SCRIPTIS OPERE CELEBRAVIT
IN BEATI LUMINIS VISIONE
SEMPITERNA PAX.

Two years later, when Cardinal Manning, Newman's great counterpart, was called to his reward, a similar ceremony was again held at San Silvestro, and Mgr. Campbell composed also for this occasion, the Elogium:

HENRICO EDUARDO MANNING
SS. ANDREAE ET GREGORII PRESBITERO CARDINALI
ARCHIEPISCOPO WESTMONASTERIENSI
QUI EX ALIENO IN OVILE CHRISTI COOPTATUSTET
OBSEQUIUM ERGA ROMANAM SEDEM
EXEMPLO AUCTORITATE MINISTERIO DUXIT
PETRI PRIVILEGIUM ET PONTIFICIAM AUCTORITATEM
STRENUUS ADSERUIT
PARVULORUM TENUIORUM OPIFICUM
MORES COLUIT OFFICIA EDOCUIT IURA VINDICAVIT
PASTORIS BONI
OPUS CONSUMMATUM DEO OBTULIT.

The throne of Italy was at this time occupied by King Humbert, whose wife, Margaret of Savoy, was a devout Catholic. Her situation as such was not easy, for the Catholics of Italy, in common with the Catholics everywhere, regarded the King, in so far as his dynasty had occupied the Papal States and set

up its throne in Rome, as an usurper. The leading families of all Italy, and particularly of Rome, were divided into those who supported the throne and its ill-acquired territory — they were known as the Whites; and those who stood by the Vatican and its age-old claims — these were known as the Blacks. The White party were largely irreligious, liberalistic and freethinking — and the Court, because it had to get support somewhere, leaned heavily on them. It was amongst these, then, that Queen Margaret had to pursue her cautious way. She was a highly cultured lady, who spoke English with the fluency of a native.

Queen Margaret chose Father Whitmee to be her spiritual Director. Many gifts presented over the years showed her abiding gratitude for his wise counsel. It became her practice to visit San Silvestro in semi-state each year during Holy Week in order to pray at the Holy Sepulchre; a practice she continued till extreme old age. Her example led many others to the same custom, so much so that the San Silvestro Sepulchre remains to this day one of the most visited during Holy Thursday in the centre of Rome. An idea of the popularity of this shrine may be gauged by the fact that during the Holy Thursday of 1904 no less than one hundred thousand persons visited the church!

Queen Margaret made two notable donations to the church. One of these is the Pietà, which shares one of the chapels with the shrine of St. John the Baptist; the other is the beautiful bronze sanctuary lamp, weighing two hundred pounds, which hangs over the altar-rail of the Blessed Sacrament Chapel. Her influence proved invaluable on various occasion, particularly when Fr. Whitmee sought to recover for he house some of the rooms and apartments which had been seized from the church after the confiscations of the Seventies.

Queen Margaret's sphere of influence as a Catholic lay in the circles of the White aristocracy and she contributed powerfully, not only to induce them to a sterner sense of their duty as Italian Catholics, but also to ease the impossible tension between Blacks and Whites. The Queen's confessor was reputed to advise and encourage her in these endeavours to an extent which of course cannot be gauged by any historian, but it seems certain that for many years he acted as peacemaker between the two groups. His influence with the Queen and with the crown circles which followed her leadership was also acknowledged, in a practical way, in Vatican circles at the time and in his humble room in the San Silvestro rectorate he was wont to receive

emissaries and messengers from both camps and sometimes very important personages indeed; in fact, the sort of people who could not afford to be seen meeting each other in public. Leading directly from Fr. Whitmee's old room in San Silvestro to the stairway a little balcony was constructed, which permitted his visitors to depart without passing through the antechamber, The balcony is still *in situ,* a mute reminder of bygone tension, for the Crown of Italy has gone into the discard and Whites and Blacks have long since fraternized.

Father Whitmee's recovery of part of the original monastery buildings is a story in itself. We have already related the position when Fr. Whitmee look over. In February 1895 the Vicariate of Rome (at the instance of Fr. Whitmee, backed by the powerful support of Cardinal Vannutelli) took proceedings against the Ministry of Public Works, claiming that a larger share of the buildings should be placed at the service of the clergy attached to the church. In November 1895 the action was decided favourably and all the rooms leading up to and including the library, as also the large hall now used as a recreation-room, were handed over to Father Whitmee. Some years later, about 1902, an application to the authorities of the General Post Office, backed by the unofficial support of the Queen, resulted in the restoration to the church of the apartments over the sacristy, where the San Silvestro Centre now operates.

Father Whitmee was a man of well-defined archeological tastes. There are few places in the world where such inclinations can be better satisfied than the city of Rome, and the church of San Silvestro in Capite is not the least important of the historical monuments of this city. In the course of his archeological pursuits Fr. Whitmee assembled a considerable library devoted to these topics, and in particular a valuable collection of guide-books to be Eternal City, some of them dating back to Renaissance times.

In the atrium of the church of San Silvestro, on the right wall here is a curious inscription engraved on a marble tablet, which dates back to the year 1130. It is a record of the ownership of the famous Column which stands in the centre of the piazza Colonna and a tremendous excommunication is uttered against those who should dare to wrest this ownership from the monks of San Silvestro! Interest attached to the ownership of the Column because, it was, in medieval times one of the high points of the city and pilgrims anxious to have a pano-

ramic view were accustomed, on payment of a small fee, to climb to the top of it. Monastic San Silvestro was also the owner of the Catacomb of St. Valentine on the Flaminian Way, outside the Porta del Popolo, but as the centuries passed by the entrance to the Catacomb was covered over and in time was forgotten, till, in the Eighties of the last century, it was rediscovered.

> "The feast of St. Valentine was celebrated in Rome in the Catacombs near the ancient basilica, the site of which has but recently been discovered on the Via Flaminia, outside the Porta del Popolo. Fr. Whitmee, the Rector of the Church of San Silvestro, celebrated Mass, as it seems that the Basilica of San Valentino was dependent in ancient times on the church of San Silvestro." [34]

Two more marble tablet in the atrium on the left and one of the right of the doorway of the church, dating back to the 8th Century record the names of the various saints whose bodies were deposited in this church after removal from the Catacombs when these became unsafe during the era of the invasions. Amongst the saints mentioned on the left is St. Tarcisius, the hero of Cardinal Wiseman's widely-read romance *Fabiola.* Could this precious relic be recovered and identified? A fortuitous happening threw light on the possibilities and the difficulties of an archeological undertaking of this kind.

> "During the past week workmen employed in making a drain in the piazza of San Silvestro, outside the church of San Silvestro, discovered a hole apparently of great extent and at a considerable depth below the piazza. About ten of them entered it with lighted torches and discovered that the church and adjoining post-office were built above continous and extensive galleries, formed like those of the Roman catacombs and containing many ancient fragments of marble and human bodies.. The bones have been deposited in the Campo Verano. Many of the skeletons belonged to men, which excludes the hypothesis that this was the cemetery of the Franciscan nuns who possessed the church from the time of Honorius IV (1285-87) until 1870. It does not seem possible that they could have belonged to the bodies of saints, about sixty of whom were buried in or about the church, a doubt which occurred to Cardinal Frederick Lante, titular in 1756, when five bodies were found near the Campanile, in the ground floor of which they now repose 'donec Deus revelet an sint corpora sanctorum martyrum', as the inscription tells us. But it is likely that these galleries belong to a general Christian metropolis, which would have surrounded this illustrious basilica during its possession by the Benedictines and Basilian monks, that

[34] do 22.2.90.

is, between 757 and 1285. The discovery adds another interest to this very important church, with which the Holy Father has honoured the English-speaking Catholics of Rome and which is the more valuable because it contains English memorials of an earlier age than the present." [35]

Father Whitmee determined, after much consultation with learned archeologists, to make an effort to recover the body of St. Tarcisius and the other saints who might lie under the church. A few months before his death the work of excavating the crypt was therefore commenced. Quantities of human remains were found in the course of the work and in some cases they were remains of people buried with Christian rites, but whether they, or some of them, were martyrs or saints could not be proved. The crypt was excavated anyhow, lined with valuable and rare marble and elegantly adorned with frescoes by a famous artist, though the pervading damp has almost obliterated them. It is an interesting addition to the church, but of no practical utility and detracts from the general appearance of the interior of the building and more than one Rector has considered the possibility of sealing it off and restoring the sanctuary to its pristine beatuy. Its construction involved Fr. Whitmee in debt, which was paid off by his successor in the rectorship of San Silvestro.

The courtyard of the church is adorned, very picturesquely, with a very large number of sepulchral tablets and other descriptions, whose texts show that most of them date back to pagan times. This notable collection was acquired by Fr. Whitmee from the dealers in antiques into whose hands they had passed when excavations and road projects were being carried out at the beginning of this century along the Via Salaria in the outskirts of Rome.

The inscriptions for the most past are in Latin; a few are in Greek; one in Hebrew. In some cases the lettering is little better than rough scratches on the surface of the marble tablets; others are superb examples of the carver's art, equal if not superior to the best that modern typography has produced. The inscripttions usually commence with the conventional pagan invocation: *Dis Manibus,* and bear the name or names of the people whose ashes were once deposited under them; the life-span of the subject is frequently noted in years, months and days Some

---

[35] do 22.7.94.

of the texts are quaint, others pathetic: Marcus Iulius Synetus, commemorating his very dear, very pious and deserving wife, with whom he lived without a quarrel for four years, four months, twenty-three days and eight hours: Fabia Harmonia (she of the beatiful name) who built a tomb for herself, her freedmen and freedwomen and their descendants.

The inscriptions have been studied several times by specialists in epigraphy and students of Roman nomenclature. A comprehensive study of them has been published by Paolino Mingazzini.[36]

Father Whitmee's archeological interests earned for him the recognition of the learned Society known as the Accademia Alessandrina, which in 1906 elected him to a seat amongst its twenty-four life-numbers. He is described on the Roll of the Society as: William Whitmee, Archeologist.

He had long desired to recover for San Silvestro the great relic of St. John the Baptist, preserved in the Vatican since 1870. Finally, in 1904 it was returned to its ancient resting-place. The reliquary had been renovated and the silver base added at the expense of the Vatican Chapter to commemorate the Jubilee of Pope Leo XIII in 1888. The Pontiff himself composed the Latin verses which now adorn the pedestal.

"Desertas Iudaeae oras Baptista pererrans
Tegmen cui corium mella locusta cibus
O vox errorum mersae caligine caeca
Audite o gentes verba salutis ait
Instat summa dies venturam iudicis iram
Effugite o tandem poeniteat scelerum
Delete haec gemitu et lachrymis numenque piate
Sic tutum ad caeli regna paratur iter
Non aliena licet rex frangere iura
Non licet uxoris fratris habere tuam
Haec olim impavidus clamabat voce Ioannes
Vox eadem e vultu reddita clamat adhuc."

LEO PP XIII.

In order to house the relic, with its exceedingly valuable reliquary, in conditions of safety, the beautiful wrought-iron grille, behind which the relic is secured, and the railing which divides in two the Chapel, were erected, at the expense of the Papal Marquis Moloney, from Philadelphia.

Putting aside for the moment the record of Fr. Whitmee's achievements in his position of Rector of San Silvestro, let us turn now to his participation in the general affairs of our Society, of which he was elected Rector-General in 1896. This event took place in the month of August, at the first General Chapter of the Society, held at the mother-church of San Salvatore in Onda. Fourteen Fathers, drawn from Italy, Great Britain, Germany, West Africa, North and South America, assembled for the purpose, and of this number six — Frs. Whitmee, Bannin, Banks, Patrick O'Grady, Moultrie and Monselle — were English or Irish.

There was a short interval between Fr. Whitmee's election and the official announcement, owing to the necessity which then prevailed of having the election confirmed by the Holy See. The news however, got around, for we find the Tablet annuncing on August 16th: "If my information is correct, the Very Reverend William Whitmee has been elected General of the Pious Society of Missions, though the result of the election has been kept secret, pending the Papal confirmation."

The Papal Confirmation was given on August 19th and three days later Fr. Whitmee assumed office.

> "Great pleasure is felt in Rome at the intelligence that the Sovereign Pontiff has been pleased to give approval to the nomination of the Very Reverend William Whitmee as Superior-General of the Pious Society of Missions. The term of office is for six years. Fr. Whitmee is still fresh in years. He has traversed continents, engaged upon the foundation of new centres of the Society, the majority of its foreign missions having been begun by him." [37]

Fr. Whitmees' first Circular Letter to the members of the Society is dated September 14th, 1896. This document opens with a brief description of the convocation of the First General Chapter, in virtue of a Papal Rescript of February 5th, of the same year and he goes on to announce that for this term the number of General Councillors is reduced from four to three and that all these personages must reside in Rome. Fr. Whitmee then goes on to express his admiration at the rapid growth of the community in recent years, a development which he attributes to the efforts of his predecessors Frs. Faa di Bruno and Bannin, the latter of whom he credits with the important achievement of the definitive publication of the Rules and

---

[36] Iscrizioni di San Silvestro in Capite, by Paolino Mingazzini, Roma 1924.
[37] Tablet 29.8.96.

with the part played in the foundation of the Apostolic Prefecture of Cameroon. He then announces that rather than open new missions he proposes to make every effort to increase the personnel of the Society and in particular to encourage them to dedicate themselves to those branches of the Sacred Ministry so desired and practiced by our Holy Founder, namely, the preaching of missions to the people and the giving of courses of spiritual exercises to the clergy.

Father Whitmee had not only given proof of his ability to conduct business of a more general nature; he had also demonstrated his competence as a Superior. For twelve years he had been a member of the General Council of the Society; the successive General Superiors had leaned heavily on him, for his ability, prudence and good sense were manifest. But his way was not the way of the autocrat and it was his habit to give due weight to the opinions and points of view of the collaborators who had been designated for him. His prudence in these matters is shown by a paragraph from a private letter written to Fr. Patrick O'Grady in Argentina, in which he makes this somewhat rueful reflection:

> "There is a tendency in the Council to do everything and leave the General very little to do. I think the Fathers in the beginning thought that I would override everybody, a thing which I have always taken great care to avoid. In fact, in this respect I have frequently not done things which I would otherwise have done." [38]

His "conciliar" attitude did not, however, prevent him from execising his authority in a very definite way when he judged it necessary. An order involving the transfer of a priest from one mission to another was held up by a Superior, on the grounds that he was needed where he was.

> "You are quite wrong in your reasoning (writes Fr. Whitmee, now very much the General) about the damage to be feared in your mission if you send the priest as instructed. You could have given up some of the work (if necessary) until a replacement came. That would have been much better than not to obey the very clear instructions given. I am responsible and have to think of the whole of the Society and its interests and I was, and am, confident that it was for its interest to do what I ordered. It is useless for me to be General if I am not to be obeyed. I am sure you, with your usual good sense, will quite see this."

---

[38] Mercedes Archieves - Whitmee Correspondence.

In spite of his declared policy of not accepting new missions, thes request of Superiors in the various mission fields were so frequent that Fr. Whitmee was in several cases forced to set aside his determination. In Argentina, in Brazil and in the United States several promising foundations were insistently offered by the Bishops in those places and the local Superiors prevailed on Fr. Whitmee to accede. His policy, however, that students should be trained as far as possible on the missions themselves was carried out. Thus in Argentina five priests were ordained between 1901 and 1906.

A mission field of great historic importance which Fr. Whitmee himself promoted was the Australian Mission amongst the aboriginals of that sub-continent. The white man in Australia had not been kind to his dusky brother; had in fact almost exterminated him, the aboriginals surviving only in the inhospitable regions in the interior and the far north of the country. The plight of these poor black men had long been on the conscience of the Australian Catholics and various attempts to succour them and convert them to Christianity had been made. Amongst these efforts was the famous settlement of Spanish Benedictines of the Cassinese Observance, a Congregation whose origins were linked with our lessed Founder whose advice to Don Peter Casaretto O.S.B. determined the latter to go ahead with his foundation. "My good Spiritual Father, Vincent Pallotti (Casaretto wrote) encouraged me to set about this good work." These Spanish Benedectines founded the Abbey of New Norcia in Northern Australia. There was also a foundation of French Trappists near Beagle Bay, but for various reasons it did not prosper and at the end of the century the Order decided to withdraw. Mgr. Kelly, Bishop of Geraldton and Administrator Apostolic of Kemberley was on his "ad limina" visit to Rome in 1900 and the withdrawal of the Trappists weighed on his mind. He determined to seek the aid of the Society of the Catholic Apostolate and in consequence he approached Fr. Whitmee who after some hesitation decided to meet his wishes. On the 12th of January 1901 the Congregation of Propaganda Fide entrusted the mission to our care. Four days later two priests and two brothers of our community, in the company of Bishop Kelly, sailed from Naples for Australia. One of the priests in this expedition was the late Fr. Patrick White who laboured in the Australian mission, both as a missionary in the field and as the delegate of the Australian Hierarchy in their appeals for

funds for the aboriginal missions, till 1909, when as a result of the division of our Society into Provinces, he opted for the Irish Province, where he worked till his death. The Australian mission, whose founder was Fr. Whitmee ,as we have seen, has added much lustre to our community by reason of the apostolic and ethnographic work performed by missionaries.

At this point we will interrupt our narrative of Fr. Whitmee's generalship and take up the thread of events amongst our Fathers in the Argentine Republic, which we had followed as far as the construction of the College Chapel by Father Patrick O'Grady in 1892.

CHAPTER VIII

The success of his first venture in church building led Father Patrick O'Grady, some years after concluding the College Chapel, to undertake the construction of a church in the little village of Rivas, which is situated some twenty miles to the west of Mercedes, in a district in which there was a considerable population of Irish sheepfarmers. An endeavour had been previously made to erect a church here, a site was purchased and foundations laid, but the project went no further. The residents now approached Father Patrick O'Grady, who took on the task, travelled over the countryside collecting funds, successfully. On the 11th June, 1898, he had the happiness of blessing this object of his labours, which was dedicated to St. Roch.

Some thirty miles from Rivas there was another settlement of Irish sheepfarmers, in a discrict known as "Las Saladas" from the river of that name which traverses it. They too wished to have a church and Father O'Grady was approached to undertake the task for them. Here again he was successful.

> "St. Joseph's Chapel of Las Saladas stands as an isolated building on the open plain, its graceful little steeple visible from a long distance over the level surface of the pampas. No township has grown up around it; many of the original settlers have moved away. But others have come in their place and on Sundays the open space around the church fills up with vehicles of every description. The congregation was for many years almost exclusively Irish, but that time has gone. This symbol of the labours and the sacrifices of the old pioneers has been inherited by many races, over all of whom St. Joseph spreads his mantle. The church is architecturally a very fine piece of work, built from the designs of a famous English architect who practiced his profession in Buenos Aires, a Mr. Robert Inglis, of whose skill several examples are to be found in that city. The confessionals are set in recesses of the wall, a feature of which this is probably the earliest instance in Argentina." [1]

---

[1] History of St. Patrick's College in Mercedes, by J. S. Gaynor, p. 74.

This church was opened for public worship on the 4th of February, 1899 and it is still served by our Fathers, as a chapel-of-ease for the Suipacha parish.

Father Patrick O'Grady was also concerned in the building of the parish church of the place known as La Riestra, where our Fathers were accustomed to say Mass in the home of a land-owner of the district, who on such occasions used to invite the neighbours and the towns-people. Here too Fr. O'Grady collected money and induced the people to nominate a committee who became responsible for the actual building operations.

There is still another instance of his church-building zeal.

> "Father Patrick O'Grady is also in a measure responsible for the erection of the beautiful chapel in the grounds of the famous 'San Jacinto' establishment on the outskirts of Mercedes which is one of the show places of the country... On one occasion Father O'Grady told the proprietors, who were friends and benefactors of his, that their duties towards the scores of families living on their estate would not be satisfactorily fulfilled until a chapel for their use was erected on the estate. Father Patrick O'Grady blessed this chapel, which is a beautiful Gothic construction, on December 15th, 1902..." [2]

Our original foundation in Argentina was, as we have seen, educational in character, but our priests gradually became involved in the direct problems of the ministry in that country, which, then as now, was understaffed in clergy. We were at the end of the nineties, responsible for the public church of San Luis in the city of Mercedes and for several Irish chaplaincies here and there throughout the Province of Buenos Aires. In 1901 the Bishop of La Plata asked us to take charge of the parish of Suipacha, which adjoins that of Mercedes.

The parish of Suipacha is a township, connected by railway and road with the city of Mercedes from which it is distant about twenty miles. In the seventies Suipacha town had not yet come into existence; there was merely the railway station and a scattered population of sheepfarmers, most of whom were Irish. In 1875 the senior Irish Chaplain of Argentina, Mgr Dillon, decided to build a chapel for these people, which was accordingly done; an oblong brick hall was erected not far from the railway station, the first brick building in what was in time to become the flourishing town of Suipacha. Two Sundays in the month the Irish Chaplain of Mercedes came to this chapel, preached and administered the Sacraments to his flock and to

---

[2] Ib. p. 75.

such others of the other races who cared to attend. A small house was built near the church for his comfort and convenience.

Some years later an English priest, Fr. John MacNerney, who had served in various parts of Argentina as Irish Chaplain, was appointed to Suipacha, on the understanding that he was to divide his time between the people of Suipacha, Irish and otherwise, and the Irish colony of a neighbouring district known as Navarro. It was a strenuous and trying life, for the priest was almost constantly travelling between the two places, and his troubles were added to by the fact that the Suipacha chapel, badly built in the beginning, became unsafe and had to be closed. Services were held in a private house until a temporary shed could be erected. Finally Fr. MacNerney retired and a priest from the Italo-Greek islands in the Adriatic — a Greek-rite priest, who was permitted to officiate in Latin — was appointed. This priest knew no English and in order that the Irish portion of his flock, who were the most numerous portion might be attended to, he was wont to call upon the Fathers from Mercedes.

This priest laid the foundations of the present church and portion of the walls and then was promoted elsewhere. Fr. John J. Petty, the quondam Pallottine was then appointed parish priest and stayed here for some years till he volunteered as a Chaplain in the Boer War. He was succeeded by a Spanish priest, who stayed a little more than a year, and then resigned on the grounds that means for his adequate support were not available. At this juncture the Bishop called upon our Fathers to help him out, and his appeal was successful.

According to the original arrangement, Father Patrick O'Grady received the appointement of parish priest, with the understanding that he could designate any priest he wished to carry out the duties, and this arrangement lasted for a couple of years till Fr. Henry Weber, a member of the Mercedes community, was appointed parish priest. Then in 1905 Father Thomas Dunleavy was nominated to the charge, which he held till 1920. During his tenure of office he erected the parish and convent schools, rebuilt the parish house, completed and adorned the church, which became, and has remained ever since, one of the prettiest churches in all that part of the Republic.

Two years after our acceptance of the parish of Suipacha, the Irish Chaplain of Capilla del Señor, then an important Irish centre with a large school in the town, passed away and once

again the Bishop asked us for assistance. This appeal was also heeded and finally, in 1905, Father Patrick O'Grady went to live there, and here he stayed till old age made it impossible for him to carry on any longer; in 1921 he came back to Mercedes, where, in 1822 he died. Capilla has no inconsiderable bearing on our history for it was the residence of the Provincial of the Irish Province on two occasion — from 1909 to 1911, in which year Father Patrick O'Grady resigned that office, and again, from 1920 to 1925, when Father Thomas O'Grady was Provincial. Suipacha was also on two occasions the seat of the provincialate; from 1911 to 1919, when that office was held by Father Thomas Dunleavy, and from 1925 to 1927, under the Provincialate of Father Thomas O'Grady, till the seat of the Province was finally removed to Europe.

We must not omit, as we deal with the career of Father Patrick O'Grady at this stage in our history, to mention that he, like his contemporaries, was not unconcerned with the Apostolate of the Press. There are two published works of his, of which the first bears the title "Poverty in Argentina" and was printed under the pseudonym "Observer." Published in London in 1897, it is in reality a lengthy pamphlet in which the writer maintains that the condition of agricultural workers in the Argentine Republic is bound to degenerate owing to the bad system of land tenure in vogue. It was written at a period in which Father Patrick O'Grady was keenly interested in the views of Henry George the Single-Taxer — with whom he had a lengthy correspondence on the subject — and his opinions were influenced by that great thinker. His second published work bears the title "The State and the Commonweal" and was originally published in the shape of weekly articles in "The Southern Cross" newspaper of Buenos Aires under the pen name "Iustitia." The articles were later collected in book form. It is a consideration of the nature of the state and its relationship with the other societies which men organize for thewselves. Somewhat arid and sententious, it is nevertheless a work which bears the marks of deep thought and a warm concern for the condition of mankind. There are also several privately-printed pamphlets from his pen, dealing with the affairs of our Society, the approval of the Rules and so on, which reflect his views on the questions which agitated Pallottines at the time of their production. Furthermore, he was a great writer of Letters to the Press; the files of "The Southern Cross" over many years con-

tain many communications from him on topics of the times — always vigorous, always forthright and trenchant.

Earlier in our story we have related the circumstances under which the Valparaiso house was closed. This closure rankled not only in the mind of Father Whitmee, who had been responsible for the opening, but in the mind of the Archbishop of Santiago as well. During a visit from the latter to Rome in 1899, he took the opportunity of getting in touch with Father Whitmee and proposing that the Pallotines should return to Valparaiso; Father Whitmee acceded to the request. In January of the year 1901 Fathers Muller and McCaul took possession of the St. Aloysius parish once more in the name of the Society; the former of these was named pastor on the 19th August of that year. Three years later Father Henry Weber was appointed to this office and proceeded at once to found a boarding-school, known as the Anglo-German College, which soon acquired a considerable reputation amongst the Chilean families desirous of an Anglo-Saxon type of education for their children. The most famous alumnus of the Anglo-German College was a youth named Leguia, from the Republic of Peru, who was later destined to become President of his native land. President Leguia spoke English with great fluency and whenever he was complimented on this ability, he used to answer that the credit was due to his teachers in Valparaiso. Amongst these teachers we may recall Fathers Weber, McCaul, Warttinger and Charola, who joined our Society in Valparaiso, and a Brother Rouke who left the community before ordination.

Father Weber, during his long rectorship of San Luis, founded and erected a parochial boys' school, delicated to St. Henry, and a parochial girls' school dedicated to St. Elizabeth, both of which still function. He was also instrumental in securing the services of the Sisters of the Cross and Passion for a senior girls' school which, now under the direction of the Daughters of Mercy, continues to operate within the parish limits. The Anglo-German College closed during the first world war and was never re-opened. The remaining history of the connection between the Valparaiso house and the Irish Province is soon told. After Father Weber's withdrawal in 1925, Father Treacy was transferred here as Rector until 1931, when his place was taken by Father Patrick Thompson. In 1932, owing to lack of personnel, the house was handed over to our colleagues of the Chilean Region, who continue to operate it up to the

present. Besides those already mentioned, the following priests of our Province gave their services in Valparaiso: Fathers Michael Walsh, Anthony Canning, John Boyle, Frank Norrison and Paul Laub. Father Frank Warrtinger, who died in 1932, is buried in the General Cemetery of Valparaiso, the only one of our priests to serve there till life's end.

After this excursus to South America, let us resume the history of Father Whitmee's Generalate in Rome. We shall now deal with the foundation and erection of the "House of Divine Providence," the famous charitable institution which was created under his inspiration and direction. The final decade of the nineteenth century had not been a happy period in the history of the Kingdom of Italy. The nation had suffered much humiliation at the hands of the Emperor of Ethiopia and his army. Heavy taxes — too heavy for the population — had been levied in order to meet the expenses of the disastrous Abyssinian campaign and the military engagements resulting from the Triple Alliance. There were bread riots in Sicily and in the north of Italy. The economic unrest was complicated by the political campaigns of the extreme Socialists and the Anarchists, who were aiming their fire not only at the Church, but at the Monarchy as well.

The social effect of this hardiship and propaganda showed itself obviously, in the condition of the poorer classes, and particularly in the most defenceless portion of that class — the children. And highest of all in the scale of hardship were to be found the foundling children.

> "The almost incredible statistics relative to the infant death-rate of Italy (states a circular explaining the aims of the House of Providence) may be verified by referring to the Registers of the Foundling Hospitals, the authorities themselves admitting that the mortality amongst these poor children is excessive... The following quotation is taken from an Italian daily paper:
>
> 'Such was the management of a certain institution in one of our large cities that during the years 1895 and 1896, some 865 infants were consigned to it... and in December of '96 there were just three survivors. Put out to nurse to the first comer, entrusted sometimes in batches of four or five to one woman, without any inquiry as to character or capability, some were starved, some were poisoned, some doubtless allowed to perish from sheer neglect'... As the outcome of serious reflection on this matter, it has been decided to found in Rome a 'House of Providence' into which will be gathered, and sheltered from harm, those little beings whose unhappy paren-

tage might otherwise brand them for life, even if in its first stage their existence was not cruelly ended..." [3]

The name chosen by Fr. Whitmee for his foundation — the House of Providence — leads us to think that in undertaking this task he was endeavouring as a good Pallottine, to follow in the footsteps of Our Founder, whose house for abandoned children was called the House of Charity.

Father Whitmee was not a man who delayed on the order of his doing, once his mind was made up, as the following quotation from The Tablet shows:

"The Very Reverend William Whitmee, General of the Pious Society of Missions and Rector of San Silvestro, has purchased a considerable property between the Via Salaria and the Via Nomentana and in the vicinity of the Villa Albani. The houses are to form a home to be called the Casa della Providenza for foundlings, abandoned and ill-treated children, who will be brought up, educated and housed ... and taught useful trades. The direction of the institution will be entrusted to the Pallotine Sisterhood ... The entire property may be described as occupying a triangle formed by the Villa Borghese the Villa Albani and the Crypt of Ostrianus. The cemetery of Felicitas is near by, while another Christian cemetery may be entered by the garden. The body of St. Philomena was found on the Via Salaria, in the cemetery of Priscilla, so the large chapel which is being formed on the ground floor will bear the dedication of St. Philomena. The work meets an entirely new need on a new system and it one of the most considerable which has ever been undertaken." [4]

The buildings existing on the property permitted Father Whitmee and his colloborators to begin operating almost at once. On the 8th March, '99, His Eminence Cardinal Vincenzo Vannutelli, titular of San Silvestro in Capite, performed the solemn blessing of the new House of Providence and of the Chapel of St. Philomena in the presence of Father Whitmee, the patronesses and helpers and many Roman and foreign visitors. The house was already in working order, some children had already at this date been taken in and skilled nurses brought from England in order to assist the Sisters.

The goal which Father Whitmee and his collaborators had set themselves was to provide space for one thousand children. It was therefore necessary to enlarge the original building. The House of Providence from the beginning had enjoyed the pa-

---

[3] San Silvestro Ardives - Busta Whitmee.
[4] Tablet 17.9.'98.

tronage of the Queen of Italy and the ladies of her Cout, so that, when a great Kermesse — perhaps the first function of this kind ever seen in Rome — was organized and held on the Pincian Hill during three days in April 1900, the concourse was very large indeed and abundant funds were made available. The Queen herself attended the Kermesse, surrounded by her Court.

The important patronage accorded to the House of Providence relieved Father Whitmee from the usual financial worries attached to such foundations, but he continued to interest himself till his death in the fortunes of the establishment. In the course of time the House of Providence became part of the federation of Assistential associations which the Italian Government was obliged to set up in order to cope with the general problem.

Father Whitmee's success with the House of Providence, which was in practice limited to female children, led him to attempt a similar work for young boys. An American gentleman, the Papal Marquis Spencer-Turner, presented him a beautiful villa on the slopes of Monte Mario, on the outskirts of Rome, known as the Villa Bello-Sguardo, which possessed extensive grounds totalling forty-five thousand square metres. Father Whitmee conceived that here an agricultural school could be successfully run if an additional piece of land could be acquired. By placing a mortgage on the original holding, he succeeded in acquiring one hundred thousand more metres and on this very adequate site the agricultural school was set up and functioned for a few years. He was obliged, however, to desist from his efforts for financial reasons and the larger portion of the land had to be sold. For many years the villa proper continued in the possesion of our Society, till the outbreak of the Firt World War and Italy' participation in that conflict made the tenure insecure and the property had to be hurriedly sold. This was the place where, previous to the opening of the Thurles College, the English-speaking aspirants to the Society were trained, in the period after the closure of the original International college.

The First Chapter of our Society, in which Father Whitmee was elected General, had devoted much of its time to the discussion of the Constitutions of the Society. These Constitutions were the version printed during the Generalate of Father Bannin in 1890, which had been examined by the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars in subsequent years and had merited a

Declaration from this body which laid down that they were in conformity with the mind of the Founder and should be observed. They were not, however, fully approved. Several changes and modifications were proposed in the 1896 Chapter and it was resolved that the examination should continue after the dissolution of the Chapter and once an agreed text could be established, they should then be submitted once more to the Holy See. The Commission proceeded to do its work, but when it was on the point of concluding it, the Holy See published, in 1901, a Decree governing the approval of Religious Institutes and their Constitutions for the future. The text of this Decree laid down some general principles for the guidance of compilers. In consequence the Commission had to do their work over again, according to the letter and the spirit of the Norms of June 24th, 1901.

Another problem which emerged from the Norms was that which concerned the approval of the Institute as such. Our Blessed Founder had of course secured ecclesiastical approval for each step in the process of the constitution of the Society of the Catholic Apostolate. Thus, on the 4th April 1855, he had applied to the Cardinal-Vicar of Rome for a blessing on the Pious Union of the Catholic Apostolate, which was granted by Rescript on the same day. Three months later, on the 11th July, he applied to the Sovereign Pontiff, Gregory XVI for his blessing, which by Rescript was granted in Audience to the Cardinal-Vicar of Rome, in very ample terms: "His Holiness grants a thousand blessings to the Society of the Catholic Apostolate and to the works of piety and charity which the Society proposes to perform." A third capital document is the famous Rescript of Pius IX, dated September 2nd, 1847 wherein the Pontiff, in answer to the "prayer of the priests of the Congregation of the Catholic Apostolate" to share in the the privileges of the Orders and Congregations of Regular and Secular Clerics "graciously granted the request." There is further the record of several dealings between the Holy See and the Society of the Catholic Apostolate which corroborate the recognitions already granted: The concession of the church and convent of San Salvatore in Onda to the Society (1846); the right of burial of members in our churches (1946); concession of indulgences and spiritual favours (1847); to supply vestments and other pious objects from the church of San Salvatore to missionaries (to which Pius IX answered "yes, according to the

decision and prudence of the priest Vincent Pallotti, Superior of this Congregation" - 1847); missionary privileges (1847); concession of the future church of St. Peter in London "to the Congregation of the Catholic Apostolate forever" (1848); concession of ordination title: mensae communis (1848); concession of privilege of distributing Holy Communion after midday (1848); the use of the Roman Kalendar (1852). There is also the document, lately come to light, which apparently, escaped the attention of earlier compilers, in which Pius IX from his refuge of Gaeta declared, at the instance of our Founder our community possesses the privileges of the Orders and Congregations.

These documents notwithstanding, it was judged advisable to adhere strictly to the terms of the Norms of 1901, which laid down that Commendatory Letters should be obtained from the Ordinaries of all dioceses in which houses of the institute concerned were to be found. The following letter from Father Whitmee to Father O'Grady in Mercedes throws some light on how the various problems were met and ultimately solved:

> "We have asked to have the Chapter postponed until October 1903 in order that we may have the Constitutions approved and also the Institute ... I send you with this post a copy of the new Constitutions, which have just been put into Latin and printed ... Father Monselle (the Procurator-General) is writing to you for letters from the different dioceses where we have houses ... We shall require one from the Bishops of La Plata, Montevideo and Santiago ... In a couple of weeks we shall present the Constitutions for approval; the examination will take some months, during which time, if observations come in from the various houses, we may still forward them to the Congregation. Only thirty copies have been printed, twelve of which must be sent to the Sacred Congregation for the Cardinals and Consultors. When the Congregation has made its corrections and changes, we shall get the other copies printed. We are not sending (the draft of) the Constitutions to Montevideo or Valparaiso. You must kindly do that with your copy when you have examined it. We should like all the Fathers to see it ... I ought to tell you that we have been obliged in the method and matter of the Constitutions by the Norms recently laid down by the Sacred Congregation for the approval of Rules. It is no longer allowed to call them Rules — the word Constitutions must be employed..." [5]

In the event, both the approval or shall we say, re-approval of the Institute and of the Constitutions did not take place till after the Chapter of 1903, when Father Whitmee was no

[5] Mercedes Ardives, Whitmee Correspondence.

longer General. The pertinent Papal Decree bears the date January 22nd, 1904 and states that approval and confirmation is granted to the Society and that the Constitutions presented to the Holy See are approved for a period of six years. A later Decree, dated March 1st, 1910, granted definitive approval to the Constitutions. Before we leave the subject of our status, we will mention that it had always been the tradition of the Society that in virtue of the Rescript of Pius IX communicating to our community the privileges of the Orders and Congregations, ours was an exempt society (the Gaeta document mentioned about having been lost sight of in the course of time.) Doubts, howerer, were occasionally expressed as to our true status and the Rector-General, Father Kugelman, decided to seek a clarification from the Holy See, which, in a Rescript dated May 10th, 1904 answered that our Society enjoyed exemption, the faculty of granting dimissiorials, erecting its own churches and oratories, reserving the Blessed Sacrament, blessing vestments and sacred objects, celebrating Mass one hour before dawn or one hour after midday.

The date selected for the second General Chapter of the Society was October 1903, not only on the grounds stated in the letter we have just quoted, but also in order to avoid clashing with the Easter work of the priests on the various missions and also to save the priests the unpleasantness of the Roman summer. The former General Chapter had been held in August and several of the Fathers fell ill from the heat, amongst them Father Bannin, who was confined to bed in San Silvestro when the important sessions were taking place in which the elections were made. By special arrangements the scrutineers then visited San Silvestro when necessary in order to compute his ballot with the rest. The 1903 Chapter was held in San Silvestro, in the hall which today serves as a billiard — and recreation — room for the students. It opened on the 4th October and nineteen Fathers were present, of whom nine came from the English-speaking parts of the Society: that is, two from London, two from Argentina, two from the U.S.A. and Fathers Whitmee, Carmody and Monselle, members of the General Council.

In the third session of the Chapter Father Joseph Bannin was elected Rector General, but he announced to the assembled Fathers that it was his desire to decline the office, on three grounds: the Roman climate was very unfavourable for his

health, there were heavy debts on the London Mission which he felt it his duty to pay off, and he thought that his work on the Catholic Education Council in London should not be relinquished. He then asked the members of the Chapter to take these reasons into account. This was done, and the decision was that he should accept the office. Father Bannin consented finally, and in the church received the obedience of the Fathers, according to custom. Next day, however, at the opening of the session, he reiterated his desire to be relieved from the burden of office and this time his pleading was succesful. The Fathers agreed to accept his resignation, and in his place Father Maximilian Kugelmann was elected.

The intrinsic importance of this Chapter derives from the fact that in it the Constitutions were finally approved; that promises and not vows were irrevocably chosen as the bond of union between the community and the individual; that the promises were not, with the exception of that of perseverance, to bind under mortal sin. Two marginal decision which concerned the English-speaking part of the Society was that the Rye house was to be given up and that preparations were to be made, before the next Chapter, to divide the Society into canonical Provinces.

We are on the last lap now of our journey towards the date of the canonical foundations of the Irish Province. Let us therefore glance once more at the history and development of the various houses which were later to be joined together in the new unit, but before doing so we shall refer briefly to the Florence house, whose history properly belongs to the English-speaking portion of our Society. Florence, as much as, and perhaps even more than, Rome, was during the eighteenth and nineteenth century a highly desirable place of residence for English people of the leisured classes, with an interest in the arts and a love for the sunlight. Queen Victoria often wintered there and other famous personages, crowned or not, followed her example in this respect. The climate approved itself to the medical fashions of the time, so the city housed numbers of wealthy refugees from the northern colds.

Some of the expatriates were Catholics, who, following a familiars pattern, were desirous of the ministrations of priests of their own tongue. In the eighties an English priest who had suffered a break-down in health sought refuge in Florence and he was requested by the Archbishop to look after his country-

men in and about this city. This was Mgr. Clement Harington Moore, an Oxford man, who, after some years as an Anglican clergyman became a convert and eventually a priest. He served for some years in London as Administrator of the old Pro-Cathedral until his health broke down and he was compelled to withdraw to Italy. Ecclesiastical honours, culminating in the title of Prothonotary Apostolic, were conferred upon him as a reward for his virtues and talents. For the purposes of his congregation, the Archbishop offered him a disused church, dedicated to St. Joseph, in a convenient section of the city; this church, an elegant erection of stone, with a large crypt and residence adjoining, was once the mortuary chapel of a Capuchin monastery which stands not far away, but was at this time dismantled and quite unfurnished. Mgr. Harington Moore, with the aid of his congregation, refitted the church and stocked it with all the accessories necessary for worship and in 1892 the English Chaplaincy of Florence came into existence. After some years Mgr. Harington Moore realized that his health continued to deteriorate and it became necessary for him to seek assistance. In this situation, he turned to his friend Father Whitmee in Rome and from him obtained a promise that whenever Mgr. Moore should feel that he was no longer able to perform his duties as English Chaplain, a Father of the Society should be sent to assist him and eventually take over. In the Spring of 1905 Mgr. Harington Moore realized that the moment had come and he called upon Father Whitmee for the promised assistance. In June of that year Father Carmody, who was serving as Rector of Hastings, was recalled to Italy and sent to Florence to take over the Chaplaincy which Mgr. Moore resigned on June 4th that year. The ailing prelate continued, however, to reside in the clergy house till his death, which took place on the 30th November, 1905.

During his tenure as English Chaplain of Florence, Father Carmody was entrusted with the task of translating into English the Latin text of the Constitution recently approved; a task which he fulfilled with competence.

The Chaplain's house was a fine two-storey building; outside the city there was a villa for the use of the Chaplain; there was, furthermore, a small endowment. It was, in fact, a pleasant post and so Father Carmody recalled it in later years. He left it in 1907 and returned to London and was succeeded by Father O'Callaghan. After the Chapter of 1909 it was assigned

to the Generalate which in 1911 withdrew from the engagement. The Chaplain's house was for some time used by an English community of Sisters as a school and till recent times their domestic chaplain served as Chaplain to the English-speaking residents.

We will now resume the history of our English missions, which we had traced as far as the Chapter of 1903. But before taking up the thread of the narrative of the houses of our Province, let us make a brief reference to the coming of our German Fathers to London,

The German population of London has possessed its own church in London since 1809. In 1874 Cardinal Manning blessed a new church for the congregation. The mission was subsidized for many years by the German and Austrian Governments, the first of which contributed one hundred, and the second, fifty pounds per annum to the expenses. Till 1903 the mission was in charge of German secular priests, the most famous of whom was Prince Max of Saxony. Occasionally English priests fluent in German served on the staff; amongst such was Rev. Dr. Adrian Fortescue the historian and liturgist.

At the end of August 1903, our Society took over the church, in response to an invitation formulated by Cardinal Vaughan. The first priests of our Society to work there were Father Anthony Muller, who commenced here his missionary life having previously served as a professor in Germany. His assistant was Father Max Haarpaintner, who had just done four years service in the Cameroons.

It would appear that all was not plain sailing for the Fathers in the beginning, for a contemporary newspaper account states:

> "The Fathers are making no further changes, trying to allay such opposition as exists, retaining the lay financial committee, the men's club and the other features of the mission that have hitherto distinguished it." [6]

The Fathers, with patience and prudence, succeeded in allaying such opposition as existed, as the following lines from the same newpaper show:

> "The German colony in London maintains its solidarity with remarkable strength. Under the former Rector, Father Schaefer, and

---

[6] Tablet 12.9.'03.

earlier when Prince Max of Saxony was a hardworking curate on the mission, the German Club at Whitechapel was a vigorous organization touching the whole lives of German Catholics in London, who availed themselves in such large numbers of its advantages. Under the new direction of the Pallottine Fathers, the organization continues its vitality ..." [7]

St. Boniface's Church under the Pallottine Fathers has had a chequered history, by reason of the two World Wars. During the first of these events, the rules against aliens were so severe that in order to save the mission, Father George Haines from the Italian Church acted as nominal Rector while the conflict lasted. Then the church burned down, and was re-erected at great expense. During the Second World War it was the object of a direct hit, whih totally destroyed it, and since then it has been re-erected on the same site.

Father Bannin's conviction, manifested at the General Chapter of 1903, that he had important tasks to perform in Great Britain, was soon to be verified by the facts. Another great onslaught against the Catholic schools was being organized and the Country Council elections of 1904 in London were to be the testing-ground in which the new tactics were to be tried out. Father Bannin was now regarded as a great practical expert in educational questions; moreover, his position as Chairman of the Catholic Association not only gave him prestige but also a powerful weapon ready to hand.

It is not easy for us in our day, who see everywhere around us a multiplicity of Catholic lay organizations dedicated to the most diverse enterprises of an apostolic character, to visualize a state of things in which the clergy and the laity trod parallel paths, rarely meeting except for professional purposes, driven into divergent interests, sometimes mutally antagonistic. Yet this was the great evil of the nineteenth century, against which one of the very earliest leaders was Vincent Pallotti, whose Society of the Catholic Apostolate was intended to be a meeting-place where clergy and laity might come together in order to face and conquer the evils of the times. The true nature of one aspect of the spiritual malaise of the nineteenth century was diagnosed with unerring skill by no less a figure than Cardinal Newnan when he wrote in 1873:

---

[7] Tablet 6.5.'04.

"As far as I can see there are ecclesiastics all over Europe whose policy it is to keep the laity at arm's length, and hence the laity have become disgusted and become infidel, and only two parties exist, both ultras in opposite directions ..." [8]

The great Cardinal then goes on to speak of the necessity of "a middle station, at which clergy and laity can meet so as to learn to understand one another, and yield to one another, and from which, as from a common ground, they may act in union on an age which is running headlong into infidelity, and however evil in themselves may be the men and the measures which of late years have had so great a success against the Holy See, they will in the Providence of God be made the instruments of good, if they teach us priests that the *obsequium* which the laity owe to religion is *rationable*."

The difficults about all 'middle stations' is that two different and sometimes differing sets of people have to be brought in to them, if they are to succeed. The Catholic Association was intended to be a meeting ground of clergy and laity and whereas it was found easy to induce the laity — at one time the Association had over three thousand members — to share in it, the clergy were another story. 'I am sorry to say' Father Bannin declared at the Annual Dinner of the Association in 1901 'that we have not had as much sympathy from the clergy as we might have had... I am unfortunately the only clergyman taking an active part in it.' Five years later, howerer, speaking at another reunion, Father Bannin was able to report that the diffidence of the clergy was disappearing. 'The shyness of the clergy, which had been shown at first, has happily worn off and now we have their hearty cooperation in all the operations of the Association."

The death of Cardinal Vaughan was followed by the elevation of Bishop Francis Bourne, of Southwark, to the Archdiocese of Westminster, just when the great education controversy was breaking out all over England. The new archbishop was a very different figure from his predecessor, who belonged to an old English aristocratic family, possessed enormous influence amongst the landed gentry and the ruling families of England, and used that influence unsparingly, by way of the personal touch and the word in the right place. Archbishop Bourne possessed no such initial advantages and such methods were there-

---

[8] Ib. 11.8.'06.

fore no for him. He realized, possibly, that the long Tory period of rule was coming to an end and that Liberals could only be moved by shows of hands. It was well to broaden the basis of the Church as a body influencing public opinion. The Catholic Association was precisely the type of organization which fitted into this policy and hence from the beginning of his rule he was a decided supporter of it. At the Annual Reunion of the Association held in 1904, Archbishop Bourne told the members how pleased he was at the social activities which they had developed in such a remarkable way, but he went on to tell them: ' I have other work for you, and much work too.' Outlining what this work would consist of, he gave a brief resume of the educational controversy up to that date and and pointed out that the County Council election, then a few weeks away, was all-important, not only for the London area, but for the whole country, since the principle of voluntary education itself was being called into question. "The future of the schools in England depends on the composition of the County Council at the next elections," he said.

The London election was duly held and its results showed a majority for the Progressives, that is, the group whose purpose was to bring all education under a single control. But, as sometimes happens, when the group found themselves in a position of responsibility and in the presence of a large, very vocal minority which raised its voice whenever its rights were interfered with, performance did not correspond to promise and sectarianism gave way to good sense. Anyhow, a General Election was approaching, and the whole affair would be tested there.

The intervention of the Catholic Association in the election was considerable. Test questions were issued, literature and canvass books supplied and the members were urged to take a personal share in the work. These efforts merited the commendation of the Archbishop. "Their willingness and earnestness on this occasion" he wrote "proved the value of a well-organized association of this kind." A short time later (October 1905) Archbishop Bourne visited Rome with the Catholic Association Pilgrimage of that year, and he spoke thus of the organization:

> "I am always glad to meet the members of the Catholic Association, because I know the excellent work they are doing in London by bringing Catholics together and making them known to one

> another and organizing them so that the influence of the Catholic body may be better felt. Whenever I meet the members of the Catholic Association, I am glad to find myself in their midst ... The Catholic Association is always ready to carry out the behests of the Bishops ..."

The great Election, which resulted in a Liberal Administration, destined to rule Great Britain till after the end of the First World War, took place in January 1906. In an attempt to safeguard the rights of Catholics to their schools, the Catholic Bishops of the London area drew up the following question for candidates:

> "Will you, if returned to Parliament, resist any interference with the right of Catholic parents, as at present secured by law, to have their children educated in the elementary schools of the country in conformity with their conscientious religious convictions?"

The Catholic Association was entrusted by the Bishops with the task of proposing this question to all candidates in the constituencies north of the Thames. The replies were ominous, for of forty-three Liberal candidates questioned, twenty-three declined the answer at all, and most of those who did, gave unsatisfactory or vague replies.

The result of the great election, held in January 1906, with its Liberal triumph, involved the immediate introduction of a new Education Bill, whose terms, it was justly feared, would be inimical to Catholic interests. The Liberal triumph was not unexpected and many wise people throughout Great Britain had been mentally, and otherwise, preparing themselves for it, and not least the Managers of many Catholic schools, who realized that in the last resort, the matter would be decided by efficiency and outlay. Father Bannin, as a matter of fact, had suggested as early as May of 1905 — in an article in The Tablet ("The Educational Crisis — Scheme to raise a quarter of a Million")[9] that a Central borrowing Found put at the disposal of Catholic schools, without interest payments and a capital amortization of five per cent per annum, would place these institutions in a very strong position indeed vis-a-vis the public authorities. Others took up the idea, suggested that the Fund should total a million pounds, and so on; the idea was not then implemented, but in time the conception that the burden of individual school

---

[9] Ib. 13.5.'05.

debt should not lie completely on the individual school was commonly accepted, with the result that schools managers breathe much easier today than their predecessors sixty years ago and the necessary credit is much more readily available.

The new President of the Board of Education was Mr. Augustine Birrell the famous essayist; himself a non-conformist, he was not without sympathy for the claims of the Catholics in educational matters, and he was far from being an irreligious man. But his main idea at this time seems to have been that the majority of English taxpayers would be satisfied with a simple, undenominational form of religious teaching in the public schools, based on the Bible and the Ten Commandments and shorn of all controversial tenets — a sort of Lowest Common Denominator of Christianity — and that the minorities who demanded more than that, should provide for it outside of school hours and school buildings. Minorities, he said, must suffer, and gave great offence with the statement. His solution of the problem was not generally satisfactory; the secularists did not want any religion at all taught in the public schools; the Anglicans, the Catholics and some others claimed that the scheme was tantamount to the endowment of a new religion, "the Board School Religion," to the detriment of older and more representative bodies.

The Liberals had won by an enormous majority and on paper they were independent even of the support of the Irish Party members, with whom they had established a sort of pre-electoral alliance based on a common understanding regarding Home Rule. But in many English constituencies the Liberals had triumphed because the Irish vote had made the difference. They were not therefore, quite so independent as it seemed. It was true that the bulk of the Party was made up, religiously, by non-conformists, but the edge of victory, in many cases, had been sharpened by the Irish Catholic vote. The Liberals were not as strong as they appeared.

Catholics, as Mr. Birrell was quite willing to concede, had a case and he was anxious to conciliate them, without giving up too much of his doctrinaire position. But he and his friends hardly seem to have expected how soon, and in what terms, this case was to be urged on the country as a whole.

> "The strength of our claims (wrote Father Bannin to the Tablet) lies in the right of the parents. This right divine the State can never take from them. The parents of our Catholic children are true

debt should not lie completely on the individual school was commonly accepted, with the result that schools managers breathe much easier today than their predecessors sixty years ago and the necessary credit is much more readily available.

The new President of the Board of Education was Mr. Augustine Birrell the famous essayist; himself a non-conformist, he was not without sympathy for the claims of the Catholics in educational matters, and he was far from being an irreligious man. But his main idea at this time seems to have been that the majority of English taxpayers would be satisfied with a simple, undenominational form of religious teaching in the public schools, based on the Bible and the Ten Commandments and shorn of all controversial tenets — a sort of Lowest Common Denominator of Christianity — and that the minorities who demanded more than that, should provide for it outside of school hours and school buildings. Minorities, he said, must suffer, and gave great offence with the statement. His solution of the problem was not generally satisfactory; the secularists did not want any religion at all taught in the public schools; the Anglicans, the Catholics and some others claimed that the scheme was tantamount to the endowment of a new religion, "the Board School Religion," to the detriment of older and more representative bodies.

The Liberals had won by an enormous majority and on paper they were independent even of the support of the Irish Party members, with whom they had established a sort of pre-electoral alliance based on a common understanding regarding Home Rule. But in many English constituencies the Liberals had triumphed because the Irish vote had made the difference. They were not therefore, quite so independent as it seemed. It was true that the bulk of the Party was made up, religiously, by non-conformists, but the edge of victory, in many cases, had been sharpened by the Irish Catholic vote. The Liberals were not as strong as they appeared.

Catholics, as Mr. Birrell was quite willing to concede, had a case and he was anxious to conciliate them, without giving up too much of his doctrinaire position. But he and his friends hardly seem to have expected how soon, and in what terms, this case was to be urged on the country as a whole.

> "The strength of our claims (wrote Father Bannin to the Tablet) lies in the right of the parents. This right divine the State can never take from them. The parents of our Catholic children are true

enough to assert their rights when and where necessary. And it is by reason of these rights that we have any claim to be considered in the apportionment of funds under the Education Act ... Our office as teachers comes in the first place from Christ, in the second from the parents. The rights of our Divine Master the State now ignores, but it cannot ignore the rights of the parents for they are voters and their influence tells in the elections. We must educate the parents to claim and assert their legitimate rights and the whole battle must be fought under these standards ..." [10]

The Liberal Government soon presented its new Education Bill to Parlament and its text showed that the Government was determined to take over complete control of all public education and was only disposed to allow the religious bodies an after-hours or between-hours intervention in the schools, and at their own expense. All existing schools must be handed over as a condition for the obtention of salaries and maintainance. There was, of course, a general outcry all over the country. Catholics everywhere, under the leadership of their priests and bishops held indignation meetings, culminating in a tremendous rally at the Albert Hall in London. The Anglicans, who were also adversely affected by the Bill, applied similar pressure on the public opinion of the country, and in the end the Governement was forced to compromise. Negotiations over the various disputed points dragged on for a long time. In these negotations, and the preliminary skirmishes between the contestants, Father Bannin took a prominent part. Thus we find him on October 16th, 1906, presenting a Protest, as a ratepayer, to the London Country Council against curtailment of the salaries of Catholic Schools; simultaneously the Anglicans, acting through a Canon Brooke, filed a similar Protest on behalf of their co-religionists.

The Government finally abandoned its attempt to pass the Bill in its original form, but the policy of hostility towards the denominational schools persisted amongst officials and policy-makers, particularly in the London area, where the Catholics had perforce to be constantly on the look-out. Early in 1907 a country Council election, in which members of the School Board were to be elected, was deemed particularly important and we find Father Bannin leading a delegation of Catholics interested in education problems to interview with the learders of the Progressive and the Moderate candidates for office. In the course

---

[10] Ib. 24.2.'06.

of these interviews Father Bannin put searching questions to these leaders, and the replies which were published in the Catholic Press of Great Britain, had considerable effect upon the London electorate.

Finally, the educational projects of the Liberal Party had to be abandoned by their sponsors, because the Irish Parliamentary Party, who till then had maintained their alliance with the Liberals, made it unequivocally clear that they would not be a party to the destruction of the Catholic schools. This position entailed a great sacrifice for it implied the postponement of their own electoral ticket, which was Home Rule for Ireland. Father Bannin made an impassioned plea that the Catholics of England should put aside their political views and prejudices on this great question, and out of gratitude support the Home Rule cause.

> "Now that the Education Bill (he writes) is dead and buried, is it not the duty of English Catholics to show their gratitude to the defenders of our schools in some adequate manner? While every praise is due to Lord Edmund Talbot, Mr. Rowland Hunt and Mr. O'Donnell and others representing English constituencies, it is still true that the stalwarts of the fight on behalf of our schools were the Irish members. It is they who compelled the Government to recognize the Catholic position and claims. It was Mr. Redmond, as their leader, who told the Prime Minister emphatically that because of its injustice to Catholics they would resist the Bill at every stage. It was this fighting policy, backed up as it was throughout the country by the frank outspoken utterances of every class of the Irish people, that helped to encompass the destruction of the late Bill. This bold stand was made against a Party from which the Irish people still expected the passage of important Irish measures, all of which were risked for the sake of Catholic education in England. Surely no deeds of mortal men were ever so heroic. Is it not time that the Catholics of England should look upon Irish claims with less prejudice than they have done... Whilst all hearts are throbbing with gratitude for the noble stand made by the Irish members and by Irishmen all over the country, in defence of Catholic Faith, what more fitting expression of gratitude can be given them than to cast aside prejudice and distrust and generously support that which, after their Faith, is the dearest of all things to the Irish heart — Home Rule for Ireland." [11]

Had Father Bannin's appeal been heeded — had the Catholic element in the Tory Party used their influence to counteract the Tory prejudice against Home Rule, the measure might have been

---

[11] Ib. 26.12.'08.

passed there and then. The events of 1916, the Anglo-Irish War, the Civil War, the Troubled Times, might never have been. But other counsels prevailed.

Even before the "Education War" was declared, Father Bannin realized the necessity of improving the school plant of the Italian Church, the largest Catholic elementary school in London, whose manager, in consequence, was in a position of leadership. Already in 1905 we find him spending a considerable sum on enlarging the school and re-equipping it, but it was not enough. In order to keep pace with the general progress in school building and equipment, further building programmes had to be undertaken. We get a general picture of the work done on the St. Peter's Schools — and, indeed, on the mission itself — from the following paragraphs, taken from The Tablet:

> "More than ordinary regard is due, by Catholics at least, to the Mission to Italians at Hatton Garden, typical as it curiously is at once of the Universal Church and of the comprehensive empire in which it finds its place. For it embraces almost every race under the sun in its congregation — English, Irish, German, French, besides the Italian colony which gives distinctive character and name to the mission. It is indeed the most cosomopolitan mission in this country. The Fathers too of the Pious Society of Missions, over whom Father Bannin presides, are Irish, English, Italian and German. And he has proved himself a strong-minded and far-seeing organizer, although the immense and increasing burdens he has drawn upon his shoulders seem to have bent his strong shoulders and cast a shade of anxiety upon his cheery smile, wonderful disciple of Mark Tapley as he is ... Father Bannin has always placed and maintained the schools of the mission in the very forefront of efficiency, so that no Catholic schools of the country have surpassed them and they hold their place of equality with the most lavishly equipped of council schools ... The old school buildings were thoroughly remodelled and extended, fitted throughout with electric light brought up-to-date in every feature of air and light and sanitation. This work the Fathers executed at a cost to themselves of £ 3000. Their accommodation is for 750 children, English, Irish and Italians chiefly, but on the rolls are 850 and there are 100 children waiting to enter. Further extension becomes necessary if these 200 children waiting to enter. Further extension becomes necessary if these 200 children are not to be lost to Catholic education and absorbed in the non-conformist schools of the London County Council. For this extension the Fathers have given a further site of land which is being cleared at a cost of £ 3,000. This is as far as the Fathers themselves can go, but in addition the new buildings will cost £ 5,000. This amount must be raised by external means, the contracts are signed and the work has begun..." [12]

---

[12] Ib. 30.5.'08.

Part of the outlay was realized over the years by bazaars and fetes for the purpose of clearing the school debt. In the end, the debt was finally cleared from a bequest made to the Society by a benefactor. But Father Bannin was gone to his reward before this bequest was received, and it is clear that the heavy school debt weighed on his mind. The outlay, on the Italian Church schools for building and improvements over a few years had been £11,000, a large sum indeed for that time and that neighbourhood.

We will now turn our attention to the Argentine houses and their history previous to the General Chapter which incorporated them into the Irish Province. Elsewhere we have noted the foundation of the Suipacha and Capilla residences, which took place during the Generalate of Father Whitmee. Shortly before the conclusion of his term of office he had arranged for three professed students — Messers O'Connor, Casey and Rourke — to continue their studies in Argentina. They were accordingly housed in St. Patrick's College in Mercedes and in a short time were joined by John Charola from Valparaiso and Robert Sorgi from Brazil and in due course these young men were ordained, Fathers O'Connor and Casey in 1905, Charola and Sorgi in 1907 — Mr. Rourke having withdrawn before ordination.

After the 1903 Chapter Father Thomas O'Grady was appointed Rector. Father O'Grady was a native of Murroe, Co. Limerick and had made his philosophical and theological studies in Rome, where he was ordained in 1893. The following year, after taking his doctorate of theology at the Gregorian University, he was appointed to the South American missions and it was at first intended to send him to Chile, but after the withdrawal of our Fathers from Valparaiso, he stayed on in Mercedes. We shall have occasion later, when we deal with his terms of office as Provincial of the Irish Province, to write about his personality and achievements .

At the turn of the century several English-speaking priests were appointed in the first instance to the Argentine missions — Fathers Browne, Dunleavy, Mitchell, Hafford, Warttinger, Madden. One of these, Father Thomas Dunleavy, was a native of the country who had joined our Society in Mercedes and continued his studies in Rome where he was ordained in 1900. With his career too we shall deal when we come to his terms as Provincial of the Irish Province. Fathers Browne and Mit-

chell were after some time transferred to the United States and Father Warttinger went to Chile where he spent the rest of his life. Father Hafford, after more than twenty-five years in Argentina, went back to his native country — the U.S.A. — and Father Madden stayed on in Argentina till his death.

Towards the end of the year 1904 the Bishop of Newark approached Father John Dolan at Mount Carmel with the request that he should supply him with some priests of the Society to take charge of a church in that city. Father Dolan, having consulted with the Superiors, acceded to the bishop's desire and thus the church of St. Philip Neri, Newark came into our hands. The first Rector was Father Patrick Browne, who with Father Moultrie had recently been transferred from Argentina to the Mount Carmel Church. Father Browne was afterwards succeeded at the St. Philip's Church by Father Augustine Gough.

We come to deal now with the foundation of our Thurles studentate. The Chapter of 1903 decided that the Society should be divided into Provinces within a prudential space of time. This decision involved the creation of separate training establishments. Hitherto the English-language recruits for the Society had been sent to Italy where they received their clerical education in common with the German and Italian students. In the event of the creation of an Irish Province it was clear that the English-language Fathers would have to provide a new training establishment. Ireland, from which most of them came, appeared to be the obvious place. Indeed there never seems to have been any question of this. That is why "The Irish house," just below the horizon, was much in their thoughts and their correspondence.

Father William Whitmee, former General of the Society writes from San Silvestro in Capite in Rome to Father Patrick O'Grady in Argentina, on the 15th May 1906:

> "I am going to Ireland in July to see if we can open a house there in order to get vocations as we are now becoming so few. I don't know of course if I shall succeed but I have been asked to write to you and ask for Father Thomas O'Grady to be sent in charge of it ... I leave here for Ireland at the beginning of July." [13]

The trip did not take place at this time, for on June 7th of the same year Father Whitmee was stricken by an apoplectic

---

[13] Mercedes Ardives, Whitmee Correspondence.

attack which incapacitated him for several months. In September of the next year, having recovered somewhat, he set out for the British Isles. His visit to Ireland and the state of his negotiations for the Irish house are set out in a letter dated September 28th, 1907 and addressed to Father Patrick O'Grady:

> "I am glad to tell you how better I am for my trip to England and Ireland — I was very pleased with Ireland, my first visit. I found it as I thought, beautifully green and a mild climate. The short time I was there, two weeks, did me a great deal of good ... Now I must tell you about the Irish house. I went to see a place in the diocese of Kildare and Leighlin. I got the permission of the parish priest and went to get the permission of the Bishop in Carlow. Dr. Foley received me very kindly and after talking for about an hour told me of a much more suitable house in the diocese of Meath. The Jesuits have a novitiate there at Tullabeg, near Tullamore. It is a magnificent place but they are obliged to leave it and go to Dublin so that their young men may matriculate in the University there. They have spent about £ 50.000 on the place and would give it to us for £ 21.000, four thousand when we take it over and the remainder in six years. I think we shall take it ... Six months are required by the Jesuits before withdrawing from the place. It is called St. Stanislaus' and was used by the Jesuits as a large college for boys; they have had in it 180 boys. Now they have their novices there ..." [14]

Father Whitmee's assistant in Rome was at this time Fr. Robert Mac Neely, who was ordained in Mercedes at the end of 1901, transferred to Valparaiso in 1903 and a year later to the Italian Church, London. At the end of 1906 he was posted to San Silvestro. Before going to Rome he visited Ireland ("which I had not seen" he stated, "since I was six months old") for the purpose of recruiting vocations, a task in which he was only moderately successful. Father Mac Neely felt that he could raise funds for the purchase of the Irish house by undertaking a lecture tour in the United States, in which country he had spent his youth. Permission was willingly accorded and towards the end of 1907 he arrived in New York. His arrival is chronicled in "The Irish World" in the following terms:

> "The Reverand Robert L. Mac Neely, Vice-Rector of the Church of San Silvestro in Capite, the church of the English-speaking Catholics in Rome, has just arrived in the USA. The object of his coming to this country is to deliver a series of lectures on the Eternal City, the Argentine Republic and Chile. The proceeds of the lectures are

---

[14] Ib.

to be devoted to the new missionary college of which Father Mac Neely is a member." [15]

From the same source we learn some details of great interest inasmuch as they establish a connection, tenous, no doubt, but still valid, between our Thurles College and the great St. Pius X.

"Before leaving Rome Father Mac Neely was received in special audience by Pope Pius X, who expressed his great pleasure at Father Mac Neely's object, the establishment of a branch of the Order in Ireland. Not only did the Sovereign Pontiff grant a special blessing to the good work, but he also presented Father Mac Neely with a large-sized signed photograph granting the Apostolic blessing to those who would in any way assist in the establishment of the worthy cause. A reproduction of the Holy Father's blessing has been made and will be shown during the lecture to be delivered in the U.S.A. Previous to leaving Europe, Father Mac Neely delivered two lectures, one in London and one in Dublin, which were well received by the Press and the people." [16]

Father Mac Neely's first effort in New York is described thus, in a note published from an American exchange in the Southern Cross of January 17th, 1908:

"Father Robert Mac Neely on his arrival from Ireland received a warm welcome from Father Dolan at the Church of Our Lady of Count Carmel, New York. A grand Concert was given by Father Mac Neely on November 26th in aid of the Missionary College in Ireland. The Chairman was Hon. D. Spellisay and among the patrons was the Marchese Spencer Turner, of Rome. Among the numbers of a vast programme were harp and violin music, Irish melodies, including 'The Harp that Once' in Gaelic, 'The Star-Spangled Banner', the first verse of which was sung in Gaelic. Father Mac Neely paid a visit to Philadelphia and booked ten engagements to lecture in that city." [17]

The lectures, it appears, were accompanied with magic-lantern slides made up from vistas of Rome, England, Ireland, Argentina and Chile. How successful Father Mc Neely's mission ws we do not know. He appears to have withdrawn from the Community and some years later we hear of him as Rector of St. Kyran's Church, Kechscherville, Pa U.S.A. He afterwards returned to Chile and served as Chaplain to an American Hospital in the north of that country, where, in the twenties, he died.

---

[15] Reprinted in S.C. 3.1.'08.
[16] Ib.
[17] Ib.

Somewhat eccentric, he pursued an erratic, though never incorrect life and we must feel grateful to him for his efforts in favour of "the Irish House".

Father Whitmee's project for the Tullabeg College could not be realized. In a letter to Father Patrick O'Grady dated December 7th, 190 he states:

> "The General of the Jesuits has forbidden them to sell the College ..." [18]

And things rested there till July of the following year. On the 6th of that month Father Whitmee writes to Father Patrick O'Grady:

> "I am leaving about the middle of the month for Ireland to see if we can succeed in opening a house for the reception of boys and young men. I hope this time to go to Thurles and try to get the Archbishop of Cashel to let us open a house there and we could send the young men to the schools of the Brothers and to the Seminary for philosphy and theology. I shall try, if I get permission, to hire a house and afterwards we can buy. The President of the Seminary, the Rev. J. Ryan, is a friend and he has approved of the idea ... Ireland must be the recruiting ground for all the English-speaking missions ..." [19]

The visit took place and Father Whitmee secured the permission of the Archbishop, Dr. Fennelly, for the foundation. This writer has not found any details of the arrangements made by Father Whitmee for renting the proportey at the corner of Pike Street and College Lane, which consisted of three cottages and a disused corn-store. As appears from the correspondence, the property was occupied by tenants at this time and it was necessary to wait for their removal. Father Whitmee writes to Father Patrick O'Grady on the 27th January, 1909:

> "The Irish house is still hanging fire. I have just written to Father Bannin that he can now go over and arrange everything as the house and property is now free." [20]

Father William Whitmee died on the 20th March of that year, three days before the first dwellers arrived in Thurles. His services to the Society in general were many; he was for over twenty years a dominant figure in the higher councils of the

---

[18] Mercedes Ardives, Whitmee Correspondence.
[19] Ib.
[20] The Chronicle of Thurles, p. 7.

institution as Procurator General, Rector General, Councillor General. As regards the Irish Province, he was the Founder of the Argentine Missions and from the above we have seen that he was really the Founder of the Thurles College too.

A short time before Father Whitmee's death, Father Dolan was called to Rome in order to assist the ailing Rector of San Silvestro. After his death, Father Dolan inherited the burden and the immediate responsibility for keeping the Irish house on its feet.

INDEX OF NAMES

Abgar, 155, 156.
Acquisti, Don 161.
Acton, Card. 18, 25.
Amherst, Bp. 88, 101, 102.
Arkell, Henry, 104, 120, 125, 127, 133
Auconi, Fr. 70, 89.

Baggs, Mgr 18, 26.
Baines, Bp. 25.
Bakanowski, Fr. 123, 124, 125.
Bannin, Jos. 8, 103, 106, 107, 141, 145, 146, 169, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 190, 191, 192, 194, 195, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 213, 219, 220, 228, 242, 246, 249, 251, 252, 253, 256.
Baptist, St. John 156, 157, 158.
Baldacconi, Angelo 27, 28, 30.
Bampfield, Geo. 109.
Banks, Fr. 228.
Barbieri, Dom. 41.
Baronius, 167.
Barnabó, Card. 91.
Barrett, Ml. 110.
Bartolini, Mgr 15.
Bellingham, Henry 119.
Bertelli Dr. 158.
Birrell, Aug. 250.
Bollandists, 157.
Boniface, Pope VIII. 156.
Bourke, 110.
Bourne, Card. 247, 248.
Bowyer, Geo. 68.
Boyle, John 237.
Bufalo, Gas. 92.
Burke, Herb. 183, 184.
Brady, James 26.
Bramwell, Baron 88.
Broecchi, Prof. 12, 22.
Browne, Bp. 88.
Browne, Pat. 254.
Bryson Mr 84, 86.

Callaghan, Fr. 219.
Canning, Ant. 237.
Capel, Mgr 116.
Carmody, Michael 104, 105, 106, 145, 146, 151, 152, 188, 212, 220, 242, 244.
Cartmell, Jos. 131.
Casaretto, Abbot 230.
Casey, 110.
Casey, Denis 254.
Castellani, M. Raph. 191.
Cavenot, Card. 164.
Challoner, Bp. 26, 27.
Charola, Jo. 236, 254.
Ciocci, Raph. 34.

Clancy, Bp. 25.
Clausi, Bern. 61.
Clement, Pope VIII. 157.
Clifford, Lord 20.
Clifford, Maurice 74.
Cognat, Abbe 69.
Colonna, Vitt. 154.
Collette, Char. 131.
Corbucci, Hor. 96, 97.
Cornthwaite, Bp. 88.
Corrigan, Arch. 148.
Cowper, W. 34.
Coyle, Fr. 79.
Cozzuoli, Eliz. 22.
Crescitelli, Dom. 96, 110, 111, 113, 114, 115, 116, 145, 148, 183, 186, 192, 212, 219.
Croke, Thos. 19.
Cullen, Paul 26.
Cummings, Dr. 68.
Cunningham, Patrick 172.

De Porta, Card. 24.
Derwentwater, Earl 154.
Dillon, Patrick 169, 171, 233.
Dionysius, Pope St. 152.
Dolan, John 152, 170, 175, 180, 255, 257, 259.
Donohue, Fr. 213.
Donovan Jer. 21, 22, 29.
Dowling, Fr. 18.
Dunford, Val. 196, 211.
Dunleavy, Thos. 234, 254.
Drummond, Lister 212, 213, 214, 215.

Edwards, Arthur 178.
Elder, Henry 19.
English, Ferdinand 26.
Espinosa, Arch. 182.

Faa di Bruno, Jos. 8, 30, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 48, 49, 51, 52, 53, 56, 68, 70, 73, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 77, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 89, 92, 108, 129, 130, 131, 138, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 165, 180, 187, 216, 228.
Faber, Fred. W. 38, 39, 40, 41.
Faenza, Seb. 83.
Fahy, Ant. D. 166.
Feeney ,Bernard 133, 169, 171, 173, 174, 175.
Fennelly, Arch. 258.
Ferrer, Fr 50, 51.
Fidelis, Sister 190.
Fish, 88.
Fletcher, Fr 213.
Fortescue, Adrian 245.

Gason Dr. 159.
Gearty, Mgr 174.
Gentili, Fr 30, 43, 128.
Geoghan, Bp. 88.
George, Henry 235.
Gigli, Avv. 24.
Gilbert, Mgr. 132.
Gilligan, Fr. 56.
Gillis, Bp. 88.
Gill, M. H. 174, 175.
Gissler, Chas. 180.
Gocher, Fr. 116, 141.
Gorman, Thos. 74.
Gough Aug. 106, 177.
Gough, William 106.
Gladstone, Miss 59.
Grant, Alex. 26.
Griffiths, Dr. 46.
Grant, Thos. 25, 26, 87.
Gregory, Pope XVI 153, 240.

Haarpainter, Max. 245.
Hafford, Thos. 254.
Hand, John 17, 18.
Harrowby, Lord 66.
Harting, Joh. 27.
Hearne, J. P. 195.
Herbert, Lady 136.
Hermans, C. 22.
Herrera, Ant. 50, 51.
Hettenkofer, John 73.
Heydon, Thos. 26.
Hodgson, Robert 20, 72.
Honorius, Pope 154.
Howard, Card. 162.
Huchison, Ant. 38.
Hulhoven, Thos. 8.
Humbert, King 121, 172.
Hynes, Bp. 26.
Huntingdon, Countess 50.

Ivers, Fl. Hardinge, 20, 26, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 57, 77, 79, 80.

Johnston, Mr, 202.

Keens, Bp 230.
Keon, Miles, 44, 45.
Kirby, Tob. 13, 14, 15, 22, 26.
Kirner, Aem. 74, 75, 84, 96, 102, 108, 110, 111, 114, 117, 119, 138, 142, 145, 146, 148, 149, 150.
Knatchbull-Hugessen, Mr 112.
Kopf, Fr. 104.
Kugelmann, Max 189, 242, 243.
Kyne, Fr. 50, 51, 52, 57, 80, 81.

Lansdowne, Lord 66.
Laub, Paul 237.
Lemarchand, Fr. 94, 193.
Leo, Pope X. 157.
Leo, Pope XIII 13, 126, 163.
Lorie, Fr. 180, 193, 194, 227.

Mackey, P. P. 165.
MacNeely, Rob. 256, 257.
MacNerney, Fr. 234.
MacPherson Mgr 18.
Magdalen, Mother M. 190.
Maher, James 158.
Mai, Card 43.
Manning, Card. 94, 95, 97, 108, 109, 115, 116, 122, 131, 132, 222.
Marden, Jo. 254.
Martin, Pope V, 156, 157.
Matthieu, Card. 164.
Max, Prince, 245.
McLean, Fr. 50.
McAuley, Peter 74.
McGuire, Rob. 95, 96.
McCaffery, Ml. 152.
McCaul, Bern. 191, 236.
Melia, Pius 68, 77, 83, 86, 88, 89, 91.
Melia Raph., 39, 40, 42, 43, 44, 46, 47, 48, 49, 53, 57, 58, 61, 65, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 76, 83, 86, 96, 98, 108, 128, 130, 160, 172.
Meager, Alf. 103, 179, 180, 219.
Michaelangelo 154.
Minucci, Ferdin. 66.
Mitchell, Fred. 254.
Moccia, Fr. 158.
Morelli, A. 22.
Morichini, Card. 24.
Moran, Patrick 20, 24.
Monks, Jo. 74.
Morris, Bp. 88.
Monselle, Aloy. 106, 188, 212, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 228, 242.
Moultrie, Ern. 175, 180, 228.
Moloney, Marq. 227.
Moore, Mgr 244.
Muller, Fr. 196.

Nardi, Mon. 121.
Nenci, Fr. 96, 116.
Newman, J. H. 13, 37, 63, 64, 222, 246, 247.
Noel, Jo. Bap. 32.
Noethen, Theod. 75, 76.
Norfolk, Duke, 221.
Norrison, Fr. 237.
North, Mr. 100.

Oakeley, Canon 104, 105.
O'Connell, Daniel 36.
O'Connor, Hugh 254.
O'Connor, Jo. 57.
O'Reilly, Sam. 168.

O'Grady, Pat. 176, 177, 183, 189, 194, 228, 229, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 241, 255, 256.
O'Grady, Thos. 254.
Oleron, Dr. 101.
Olliffe, Bp. 26.
O'Mahony, Bp. 19.
O'Reilly, Jo. 26.
Orioli, Card. 42.
Orlandi, Carlo, 186, 188, 190.
Ortelli, Sig. 184, 185.
O'Sullivan, Pat. 20.
O'Sullivan, Ml. 26.

Fallotti, Vinc. 5, 6, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 29, 30, 31, 34, 38, 40, 41, 42, 44, 46, 47, 57, 58, 60, 61, 69, 70, 84, 92, 93, 136, 159, 160, 161, 208, 230, 240, 241, 146.
Parkington, J. 112.
Pascali, Fr. 59.
Passavalli, Archbp, 96.
Patmore, Coventry, 127, 138, 139, 140, 212.
Paul the Deacon, 156.
Paul, Pope I, 154.
Petty, Jo. 170, 173, 175, 179, 180, 234.
Piale, 22.
Picton, 208, 209.
Pius, Pope IX, 22, 37, 121, 123, 157, 159, 240, 241, 242.
Power, Ml. 158.
Power, Thom. 19.
Poynter, Bp. 27.
Price, Fr. 27.
Price, Miss 96.

Quinlivan, Canon 95, 100.
Quinn, Bp. 19.

Ramsay, Grace, 25.
Ratti, Fr. 37.
Reardon, Mgr 174.
Rebours, Abbe, 18.
Redman, Fr. 100.
Reynolds, Fr. 18.
Riddell, Bp. 107.
Rinaldini, 22.
Roskell, Bp. 88.
Rossini, 93.
Ryan, Arch. 163.
Ryan, Bp. 131.
Ryan, J. 258.

Savino, Fr. 178.
Schloss, 125, 126.
Sciamplicotti, Ab. 16.
Sharples, Jo. 26.
Shrewsbury, Lord, 21, 38, 39.
Solaro, Count 28.
Sorgi, Robert 254.
Smith, Vinc. 158.
Spalding, Arch. 18.
Spenser, Ig. 11.
Spenser-Turner, Marquis, 239.
Stanton, Thos. 175.
Stephen, Pope St. 153, 158.
Stone, Fid. Kent 178, 179.
Stonor, Arch. 162, 165, 205.
Sylvester, Pope St. 153.

Talbot, Bp. 27.
Tarsicius, St. 153, 225, 226.
Tempest, Walter 21, 59, 60, 90.
Thacker, Thos. 73, 74, 84.
Theofanes, 156.
Thompson, Pat. 236.
Toesca, Dott. 158.
Torlonia, Carlo 22.
Treacy, Henry 236.
Turner, Bp. 88.

Ullathorne, Arch. 88.
Ussher, James 167.

Vaccari, Fr. 59, 76.
Valeri, Valerio Card. 158.
Vannutelli, Vinc. Card. 238.
Vaughan, Herb. Card. 10, 136, 178, 196, 245, 247.
Vaughan, Kenelm 178, 221.
Ventura, Gioacch. 13.
Venturini, Fr. 133.
Veronica, Mother M. 160.
Vicentini, Sr. Gertrude 160, 161.
Victor Emmanuel, King, 121, 122, 123.
Volterra, Fr. da, 154.

Walker, Chas. 50.
Wallace, Fr. 102.
Walsh, Mich. 237.
Walsh, Mgr. 43, 44.
Warttinger, Fr. 236, 237, 254, 255.
Weber, Henry 234, 236.
Weidner, J. 188.
Whelan, Bp. 26.
White, Pat. 230, 231, 255, 256, 258, 259.
Whitmee, William 8, 20, 104, 133, 134, 135, 136, 146, 161, 162, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 182, 186, 188, 189, 190, 191, 194, 205, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 338, 339, 330, 237, 238, 239, 240, 242, 244, 254, 255, 256, 258, 259.
Wiseman, Nich. Card. 10, 25, 39, 41, 42, 43, 44, 47, 51, 58, 59, 62, 63, 65, 67, 72, 79, 83, 84, 87, 89, 90, 91, 93, 225.
Woodlock, Bart. 16, 17.
Woollett, Fr. 50.